The Irish Catholics of Manchester and Salford: Aspects of Their Religious and Political History, 1890-1939.

Steven J.Fielding.

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

Centre for the Study of Social History,

University of Warwick,

May, 1988.

CONTENTS.

Tables contained within the text.

Maps contained within the text.

Acknowledgements.

This project has been funded by grants from both the University of Warwick Graduate Award scheme and, in its first and most important year, my family. Without such assistance this work would not have seen the light of day. I would like to thank my supervisors, Tony Mason and Jim Obelkevich, for their often crucial aid. I am also grateful to Kay Rainsley for guiding me through the complexities of using a word processor. To all those librarians who have suffered my requests and ignorance I would like to extend my sympathies and thanks. Less formal, but no less invaluable support and advice has come from: Lyndsay Abbot, Lutz Budrass, Mark Clapson, Peter Clarke, Andrew Davies, Chris Downham, Junichi Hasegawa, Dermot Healey, Dr.James Kilmartin, Jon Lawrence, Ros Lucas, Bryant Simon, Mick Stevens, Nick Tiratsoo, John Walton and Terry Wyke. I must also thank the patient editors of the Manchester Region History Review and the International Review of Social History. I can only apologise to those I have failed to mention. Finally, I would like to dedicate this volume to my parents, Tom and Pat Fielding.

Summary.

The purpose of this thesis was to highlight an aspect of the heterogeneous character of working class culture. To this end, it investigated the Irish Catholic population of Manchester and Salford, two cities not normally associated with sectarianism, in the period 1890-1939, a time when anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment was supposedly on the wane in the face of 'class' feeling. The study concluded that hostilities based on nationality and religion were a recurrent feature of popular culture. The rise of the Labour party failed to transform such deep-rooted sentiments, to some extent it made use of them. The Catholic Church used its extensive influence in order to isolate adherents from non-Catholics, thereby contributing to the prevalent - although often latent - sectarian feelings. Despite changes which helped weaken the strength of mutual mistrust, in 1939 Irish Catholics remained culturally Janus-faced: they were neither fully Irish nor completely Mancunian. Consequently, they held a contingent and variable place within the city's working class. This study utilised numerous source materials, including oral history, the local press, Catholic diocesan and parochial archives, as well as political records.

Introduction.

In the wake of the Labour party's two defeats in the General Elections of 1979 and 1983 some historians have nostalgically contrasted the socially and politically fissiparous working class of the 1980s with a supposedly more homogeneous 'traditional' working class which existed between 1880 and 1951.[1] Others are more inclined to question whether pre-1951 workers were more united than their contemporary counterparts.[2] This work has more sympathy with the latter approach than the former, the original intention being to investigate an aspect of working class division in the pre-1939 period. But what type of division? A large number of possibilities presented themselves: gender, status, skill, region, income or residence are but a few. The list is almost endless. The Irish Catholic part of the working class was selected because, without diminishing the importance of other forms of distinction, the divide between English Protestant and Irish Catholic was one of the most significant points of fissure within the culture and politics of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century working class. This was most clearly so in those parts of Britain - such as Lancashire, west Yorkshire and Clydeside - which were amongst the first of the

---

[1]Eric Hobsbawm, 'The forward march of Labour halted?', in Martin Jacques and Francis Mulhearn (eds.), The Forward March of Labour Halted? (1981). This particular seam has also been assiduously mined by Jeremy Seabrook in his What Went Wrong? (1978) and A World Still to Win (1985).

[2]Jim Obelkevich, 'New perspectives on the history of the Labour party 1918-45', Society for the Study of Labour History, no.47, 1983; Gareth Stedman Jones, Languages of Class (Cambridge, 1984), pp.1-24; Alastair Reid, 'Class and organisation', Historical Journal, vol.xxx, no.1, 1987.

country's regions to industrialise. Where the nineteenth century working class lived so did the Irish. Seemingly, Irish immigrants during the early nineteenth century were the raw, passive objects of market forces. As one contemporary cotton manufacturer noted

> Ireland is our market for labour, the supplies of which are regulated on the same principles which regulate the supplies of articles of consumption and commerce.[3]

Manchester was selected partly for reasons of neglect. The city had borne much of the force of the original great wave of Irish immigrants during the 1840s and 1850s. Even in the late nineteenth century, together with Salford, the city contained the fourth largest concentration of Irish numbers in Britain.[4] However, unlike Liverpool, Glasgow and London - the other main areas of settlement - the city's Irish have been comparatively ill-served by historians.[5] A recent collection of essays on the Irish experience in the nineteenth century barely mentioned the city, although York and Bristol were covered.[6] Liverpool and Glasgow particularly dominate the scene. Unfortunately, the very strength of sectarianism evident in those cities makes them untypical and, therefore, means that it is difficult to see them as places from which it is possible to

---

[3]A.Redford, Labour Migration in England, 1800-50 (Manchester, 1975), p.161.

[4]It should be noted at this stage that when reference is made to 'Manchester' it also includes Salford, except when otherwise stated.

[5]For Glasgow, Tom Gallagher, Glasgow. The Uneasy Peace. Religious Tension in Modern Scotland (Manchester, 1987); for Liverpool, Frank Neal, Sectarian Violence: the Liverpool Experience, 1819-1914 (Manchester, 1987); for London, Lynn Hollen Lees, Exiles of Erin (Manchester, 1979). It is more than ironic that all three of these histories have been published by Manchester University Press!

[6]Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley (eds.), The Irish in the Victorian City (Beckenham, 1985).

generalise about the experience of the Irish in Britain. London, as is well known was London, being unique in almost every respect. Manchester, with its apparently calmer inter-national and inter-religious relationships, was perhaps - although undeniably distinct - more typical.

The existing literature on the city's Irish Catholics was a particularly mixed bag. In particular, the small handful of M.A. theses written prior to the 1970s was of distinctly variable quality.[7] J.M.Werly had written a combative article on the Irish in 1973; this only covered the classic period of immigration.[8] The main thrust of G.P.Connolly's massive 1980 thesis on the city's Catholic Church was, unfortunately, rather eccentrically and at length, to refute the notion that the Irish had saved the Catholicism from decay. Within his vast work the Irish were relegated to the sidelines. Connolly's interests also concluded at the mid-century.[9] This left only Melanie Tebbutt's M.A. thesis which, although well written and well researched, did not attempt a general history of the Irish. Instead, she tried to paint the perceived 'image' of the Irish and other minority groups up to the early twentieth century.[10]

---

[7]M.E.Brock, Irish Immigrants in the Manchester District 1830-1854: Some Aspects of Their Social and Political Importance, unpublished M.A., University of Southampton, 1962; F.L.Wilson, The Irish in Great Britain During the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1946.

[8]J.M.Werly, 'The Irish in Manchester, 1832-49', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xviii, no.71, 1973.

[9]G.P.Connolly, Catholicism in Manchester and Salford, 1770-1850, unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1980.

[10]Melanie Tebbutt, The Evolution of Ethnic Stereotypes: An Examination of Stereotyping with Particular Reference to the Irish (and to a Lesser Extent the Scots) in Manchester during the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1982.

The period 1890-1939 was also chosen because of its relative neglect. These were years which appeared to contain fewer instances of Irish-English conflict and, therefore, provoked fewer historical accounts. To some extent this was a correct impression, especially when compared with the stormy years between the late 1840s and the early 1870s which lay in the immediate wake of the massive flood of Famine emigrants. To investigate this earlier period seemed somewhat superfluous: so many had already done so. It seemed more interesting to discover the place of the Irish and their descendants in these supposedly quieter years. It soon became clear that the period, roughly between the fall of Parnell and the outbreak of the Second World War, was less than tranquil for Irish Catholic members of the working class. Although the case for a diminution in sectarian tensions during these years remained strong, the population was still clearly distinguishable from their non-Irish, non-Catholic peers in terms of nationality, religion and even socio-economic status. Most historians, however, stood firm at 1914, content that the Irish had been largely integrated into British society. It is only recently that a major historical work has crossed this self-imposed boundary into the 1930s and beyond.[11]

There are two main reasons why historians of the Irish have been less interested in the period after the 1870s. The first is that tension quite visibly declined as the pace of Irish immigration slackened. Secondly, and more disputably, the Irish are assumed to have become integrated within the working class through the agency

---

[11]Gallagher, Uneasy Peace. It is ironic that, J.A.Jackson's path-breaking The Irish in Britain (1963), studied the period up to the early 1960s. Perhaps, being more sociologist than historian he was less dominated by the power of periodisation.

of the labour movement.[12] It is a common theme that Chartism during the 1830s and 1840s and the post-1889 trade unions as well as the Labour party after 1918 were forces for unity within the working class. The centrality of the British labour movement to what was essentially an homogeneous working class is thought to have acted as a break on sectarian differences.[13] When compared with other industrial countries, especially the United States, this has a certain relative truth.[14] However, this is hardly the whole story. Although not underestimating the calamitous effect of the Famine influx, this type of approach suggests that it was the abscence of a popular class conscious organisation that, in the last instance, allowed sectarian conflict to dominate working class life.

Within Chartism Dorothy Thompson has discovered a "cohesion in a consciousness of exclusion" between Irish and English workers. The repeal of the Union, she argues, was an "organic part' of Chartism's demands which gave a common platform to both nationalities.[15] This conclusion to some extent confirmed Rachel O'Higgins's earlier point that Irish immigrants were very often found in the vanguard of this

---

[12]Although in general agreement with this line of thought, Paul T.Philips suggests that hostilities began to recede in Lancashire after 1870 partly as a consequence of the anti-sectarian James Fraser's tenure as Bishop of Manchester, The Sectarian Spirit: Sectarianism, Society and Politics in Victorian Cotton Towns (Toronto, 1982), pp.3-4.

[13]As argued by John Rex, 'Immigrants and British labour: the sociological context', in K.Lunn (ed.), Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities, (1980), p.27

[14]Herbert G.Gutman, 'Work, culture and society in industrialising America, 1815-1919', American Historical Review, vol.lxxiix, 1973, pp.540-1.

[15]Dorothy Thompson, 'Ireland and the Irish in English Radicalism before 1850', in James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (eds.), The Chartist Experience (Cambridge, 1982), pp.125-9.

British movement.[16] According to John Foster it was the demise of Chartism that opened the way for a vicious sectarianism, largely absent during the movement's heyday.[17] This impression has been underlined by Neville Kirk, who, in describing the miseries of Lancashire's Irish during the 1860s and 1870s, looked back to the better days of Chartism and forward to the hope of 1889.[18] In both periods the Irish are seen as forming a vital element in the vanguard of Britain's working class. Eric Hobsbawm, in summing up this period has suggested that they

> provided the British working class with a cutting edge of radicals and revolutionaries, with a body of men and women uncommitted by either tradition or economic success to society as it existed around them. It is no accident that an Irishman, Feargus O'Connor, was the nearest thing to a national leader of Chartism, and that another, Brontere O'Brien, its chief ideologist, that an Irishman wrote 'The Red Flag', the anthem of the British labour movement, and that the best British working class novel, 'The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists'.[19]

This tradition, of which Hobsbawm is a leading light, suggests that, apart from the period between the late 1840s and the late 1880s, workers were generally united in terms of politics and culture. Only during the interregnum which started with the fall of Chartism and ended with the unionisation of the unskilled, inserted into which was a massive influx of Irish immigrants, did sectarianism attain a dominance. Ethnic feeling is seen as but one aspect of a wider process of fragmentation which occurred during this period. The

---

[16]Rachel O'Higgins, 'The Irish influence in the Chartist movement', Past and Present, no.20, 1961.

[17]John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution (1974), pp.212-19.

[18]Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working Class Life in South East Lancashire and North East Cheshire 1850-70, unpublished Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 1974, p.378.

[19]E.J.Hobsbawm, Industry and Empire (1975), p.311.

implication is that once 'fragmentation' had been overcome ethnic consciousness diminished.[20] According to Foster and Kirk sectarianism was probably largely the result of manipulation by a middle class intent on dividing worker from worker.[21] Thus, E.P.Thompson has argued, Irish immigrants prior to the Famine were hardly any different to other members of the emergent working class.[22]

For the pre-1850 period a number of other historians have made it their business to refute the notion that Irish and English, as thought by those mentioned above, had much in common. Much of this has a particular bearing on the 'outcast' status of Manchester's immigrant population during this earlier period. Such research has confirmed Engels's description of the existence of an Irish ghetto in the city.[23] Moreover, J.H.Treble has suggested that the Irish in Manchester and Liverpool were not only socially but also politically at odds with the host population. There was, in short, no common political platform.[24]

---

[20]Neville Kirk, 'Ethnicity, class and popular Toryism, 1850-70', in Lunn, Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities, p.95.

[21]Foster, Class Struggle, p.219; Kirk, 'Ethnicity', p.92.

[22]E.P.Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (1979), pp.469-85.

[23]Frederick Engels, The Conditions of the Working Class in England (1979), pp.87-8, 93-4, 96-8, 100; Werly, 'Irish in Manchester', pp.345-50; A.D.George and Sylvia Clark, 'A note on 'Little Ireland', Manchester', Industrial Archaeology, vol.xiv, no.1, 1979.

[24]J.H.Treble, 'O'Connor, O'Connell and the attitude of Irish immigrants towards Chartism in the north of England 1838-48', in J.Butt and I.F.Clarke (eds.), The Victorians and Social Protest (1973).

Whereas there is vigorous debate about the place of the Irish in working class culture and politics under Chartism this is much less the case for the period after 1889. This is principally because the most influential strand in the historiography of the British working class during this latter period emphasises homogeneity and unity. As Eric Hobsbawm has recently stated the working class between 1880 and 1951 was "a singular rather than a plural noun."[25] Moreover, he suggests that at the 'core' of this class culture stood the labour movement. According to Hobsbawm "the world and culture of the working class is incomprehensible without it."[26] Such an influential picture of working class life has inevitably coloured much that has been written on the experience of the Irish in Britain after 1890.

Some historians of the Irish have suggested that the great strike wave of 1889, during which unions began to recruit the unskilled in large numbers, began a process that hastened the social and political integration of the Irish into the working class. It registered, in Lynn Lees's words, "the increased consciousness of the low-skilled" which led directly to a lessening of sectarian tensions between English and Irish workers before 1914. By revealing a common class interest unionisation supposedly made divisions of nationality and religion less relevant. As Lees has suggested,

---

[25]Eric Hobsbawm, 'The making of the working class 1870-1914', in his Worlds of Labour. Further Studies in the History of Labour (1984), p.207.

[26]Eric Hobsbawm, 'The formation of British working class culture', in his Worlds of Labour, p.178.

"occupational loyalties helped break down ethnic separatism." The eager manner in which the Irish in Britain went to fight and die for King and Empire is presented as the climax of this process.[27]

This view, like the more general notion of working class culture outlined by Hobsbawm, places an undue emphasis upon the effect of trade union membership on workers. It can be refuted on a number of grounds. Firstly, by no means all unskilled workers were unionised by 1914. As late as 1910 only one worker in six belonged to a union; during the 1930s trade unions continued to be viewed with suspicion in some unskilled districts.[28] Secondly, even those active in the trade union movement were by no means untainted by sectarianism. During the London dock strike of 1889, which Lees and O'Tuathaigh see as having an almost symbolic importance, at least one leader exhibited anti-Irish prejudices.[29] This is confirmed by Hobsbawm himself, who makes the point that "trade union consciousness", being the "elementary form" of class consciousness, can easily co-exist with racial, national and religious prejudices.[30] Finally, the Irish went to war in 1914 for a complex set of reasons, not least of which was to ensure the passage of the Home Rule Bill.

---

[27]Lees, Exiles, pp.241-3; M.A.G.O'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in nineteenth century Britain: problems of integration', in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City, p.30; Sheridan Gilley, 'English attitudes to the Irish, 1780-1900', in C.Holmes (ed.), Immigrants and Minorities in British Society (1978), pp.105-6.

[28]Hugh Clegg, A History of British Trade Unionism Since 1889. Volume II, 1911-39 (Oxford, 1985), p.3; Jerry White, The Worst Street in North Lodon. Campbell Bunk, Islington between the Wars (1986), p.108.

[29]Ben Tillett, Memories and Reflections (1931), pp.158-9.

[30]E.J.Hobsbawm, 'Working classes and nations', Saothar, no.8, 1982, p.79.

If it is not possible to state that the Irish had been integrated, let alone assimilated, into the indigenous working class it must be the task of the historian to ascribe to them a role. Perhaps Lynn Lees has come closest to undertaking this mission. Somewhat contradicting her concentration on the role of trade union membership in fostering integration, she has described the existence of a "Catholic workers' culture" in pre-1914 London. This, she claims, acted as a 'subculture' within general working class society and embraced the Irish from first to fourth generations. The central aspect of this subculture was the Catholic parish church. However, this style of life also shared many of the characteristics evident in general proletarian existence, such as extensive use of the pub and participation in street activities. Yet, if this was a culture shaped by forces affecting the rest of the working class, it was one that remained at some distance from the English.[31]

The subculture concept is helpful in a number of ways; it at least helps define the problem and assemble those factors which made the Irish 'different' and those that made them 'similar' to the rest of the working class. However, Lees applies the concept in a way which suggests that there was a harsh, rigid division between the Irish and the English. As David Feldman has pointed out, she tends to assume an "all-encompassing 'Irishness'" which equally effected every member of the minority group. This allows little room for the

---

[31]Lees, Exiles, p.164, 197, 246-9.

existence of individual choice.[32] Moreover, 'subculture' implies that the Irish formed a deviant strand within an otherwise dominant, homogeneous class culture.[33] Given that it is increasingly difficult to sustain the latter notion, subculture loses much of its initial attraction. From Irish 'subculture' being the problem, British working class culture has itself been revealed as possessing certain difficulties of definition.

As with culture, so with politics. Numerous historians have considered that, because of Home Rule, the Irish did not adhere to 'class politics'.[34] W.M.Walker has suggested that Catholic priests in Scotland only supported Nationalism because it diverted Irish attention from matters of class.[35] Similarly, Sheridan Gilley has stated that their 'obsession' with Home Rule prevented many members of the Irish working class becoming active in wider British politics.[36] However, to see the Irish and their descendants as deviating from a model class consciousness is hardly appropriate, given the weakness of such a consciousness - at least when expressed

---

[32]It is particularly hard to sustain the notion of a unified and distinct Irish Catholic subculture in Manchester: amongst the most recent products of this milieu have been Nobby Stiles, the Manchester United footballer, author Anthony Burgess, 'racist' former headmaster Ray Honeyford and - a post-1945 product - Stephen Morrissey, late of the pop group 'The Smiths'.

[33]David Feldman, 'There was an Englishman, an Irishman and a Jew ... immigrants and minorities in Britain', Historical Journal, vol.xxvi, no.1, 1983.

[34]For the most recent example, see I.G.C.Hutchison, 'Glasgow's working class politics', in R.A.Cage (ed.), The Working Class in Glasgow (Beckenham, 1987), p.133.

[35]W.M.Walker, 'Irish immigrants in Scotland: their priests, politics and parochial life', Historical Journal, vol.xv, no.4, 1972, p.663.

[36]Gilley, 'English attitudes', pp.104-6.

politically. Once again, the Irish have been castigated for not being like the rest of the working class when the non-Irish majority itself hardly conforms to historians' ideal.

It would be interesting to know how the Irish compared with other minorities resident in Britain. They are generally considered to be distinct because, as a group, they apparently neither wanted full assimilation nor complete separation from the indigenous culture. Consequently, they are seen to be, in M.A.G.O'Tuathaigh's phrase, a "peculiar minority".[37] However, it would be hard to find a minority group which did not exhibit these contradictory tendencies. It is more likely, as T.M.Endelman has suggested of the Jews in Georgian England, that 'acculturation' is an uneven process undertaken more by indivduals than by the group as a whole.[38] Yet, it is undoubtedly true that the Irish continued to hold an ambiguous cultural position within British society at least up to 1939. Constantly disappointing Gaelic League activists with their 'apathy' their particular concerns still proved a thorn in the side of both the Liberal and Labour parties. This sense of ambiguity was given voice by a number of speakers who attended a conference organised by the Society for the Study of Labour History in the mid-1960s. Whereas some participants were concerned to emphasise Irish political radicalism and their over-representation in left-wing parties and trade unions, others pointed to the divisive influence of the Catholic Church and the Home Rule issue within the working

---

[37] O'Tuathaigh, 'Irish in nineteenth century Britain', pp.13-14.

[38] T.M.Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England, 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society (1979), Introduction.

class.[39] A later conference echoed these earlier disagreements. The focus had nevertheless subtly shifted from the glorification of a radical minority to an awareness of the variability of mass experience. It was less a question of the Irish being either 'radical' or 'reactionary' and more that they could be both - often in the same person. Interestingly, attention was placed more upon the unwillingness of the English to accept the Irish *rather than the* latter's inability to adapt to a supposedly unproblematic working class culture.[40] These were years of prominent National Front activity, when a leader of the Conservative party felt able to articulate fears about the indigenous culture being 'swamped' by immigration. Indeed, it is increasingly the case that the peculiarities of Englishness, rather than the troublesome Irish or any other minority, dominate historical perspectives.[41]

The impact of a more evident indigenous racism amongst the British working class in the wake of post-1945 black immigration has encouraged some to take up Marx's comparison between the negro slave of the United States and the Irish in Britain. In 1870 he suggested that

> Every industrial and commercial centre of England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over

---

[39]Conference report, 'Irish immigrants, English labour', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin, no.12, 1966.

[40]Conference report,'Responses to migrant labour', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin, no.37, 1978.

[41]Tom Nairn, The Break Up of Britain (1981); Robert Colls, 'The politics of Englishness', graduate seminar, Centre for the Study of Social History, University of Warwick, 14th January 1988.

> himself. He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the "niggers" in the former slaves states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his money. He sees the English worker at once the accomplice and the stupid tool of the English domination in Ireland.[42]

In this manner L.P.Curtis has suggested that the Irish were seen as inferior to the English because they were thought racially different.[43] This point has been taken up by some on the left of contemporary British politics who see in the British presence in Ulster an echo of colonial power, that is the domination of a subject 'race'.[44] However, Sheridan Gilley has successfully demonstrated that the Irish were not seen in racial terms. Instead he has pointed to more variable factors which conditioned the Irish-English relationship, principally to the course of Home Rule.[45] A devolved government for Ireland, let alone full independence, was viewed with an intense hostility difficult to comprehend in post-imperial times (although in the light of the 1982 Falklands war, perhaps not - another example of a contemporary event changing historical perspectives). A nation morbidly afraid of losing a distant Empire could not countenance relaxing its grip on part of what is still described as the 'British' Isles. Consequently, when the Irish in Britain demanded Home Rule they were met with an almost universal hostility. The issue helped destroy the chances of a Liberal government for the last fifteen years of the nineteenth

---

[42]Marx to S.Meyer and A.Vogt, April 9th 1870, in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, On Britain (Moscow, 1962), pp.551-2.

[43]L.P.Curtis, Anglo-Saxons and Celts (1968).

[44]Information on Ireland, Nothing But the Same old Story. The Roots of Anti-Irish Racism (1984).

[45]Gilley, 'English attitudes', pp.84-8.

century. Even when the Irish Question was 'solved' in the early 1920s this did not allow English-Irish relations to achieve an equipose. Competition for scarce jobs and religious rivalry continued to plague the working class. Even after the creation of the six counties and the Irish Free State the issue of independence still managed to intrude onto the mainland. In 1939 this took the form of an incompetent Irish Republican Army bombing campaign.

The importance of the Catholic Church, both to the Irish and those of Irish descent, has also had significant implications. In the eyes of W.J.Lowe the Catholic Church was

> ...a primary social institution, which fostered the growth of a community identity [and] gave the immigrant Irish a valuable sense of constancy and continuity..."[46]

This was the era of the 'Fortress Church' intent on defending adherents from all forms of non-Catholic influences and contacts. Well into the 1930s the Church was still widely mistrusted by non-Catholics. During this period religion remained a factor of some importance, influencing Catholic-Protestant relations - even those of an intimate nature that, sometimes, ended in marriage. It has been suggested that the presence of large numbers of Catholics in Lancashire made the indigenous population more acutely aware of their own religious allegiances.[47] There is, in contrast, no religious aspect to anti-black prejudice. The impact of religion quite clearly differentiates the Irish experience from those of

---

[46]W.J.Lowe, 'The Lancashire Irish and the Catholic Church, 1846-71: the social dimension', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xx, no.78, 1976, p.129. The centrality of the Church to immigrant experience is also made in E.D.Steele, 'The Irish presence in the north of England, 1850-1914', Northern History, vol.xxii, 1976.

[47]Henry Pelling, 'Popular attitudes to religion', in his Popular Politics and Society in Late Victorian Britain (1968), pp.32-6.

other minorities. Unlike for West Indians, religion was a point of unity rather than of division within the Irish immigrant group.[48] Moreover, unlike the contemporary black minority the Irish could escape any unpleasant consequences of birth by changing their names or accents and by abandoning their faith. For those merely of Irish descent the escape route would have been even more clear.

Whereas a clear distinction should be made between the Irish and post-1945 black immigrants, their experience finds a loud echo in the lives of the many Eastern European Jews resident in Manchester after the 1880s. With the aid of oral history - also utilised in this study - Bill Williams has pointed to the complex inter-weaving of Jewish and non-Jewish influences in many areas of immigrant life. Feelings of ethnicity and class were not necessarily competitive but often complimentary: integration and separation were not easily distinguished.[49] Perhaps the Irish were not so 'peculiar' after all. However, the role of the Catholic Church also sets the Irish apart from their Jewish counterparts. Manchester's anglicized Jewish elite quite plainly attempted to force their Russian and Polish co-religionists to assimilate into local society. They even discouraged the use of Yiddish.[50] The Catholic Church, in contrast, was caught between two positions. On the one hand it encouraged

---

[48]David G.Pearson, 'Race, religiosity and political activism: some observations on West Indian participation in Britain', British Journal of Sociology, no.3, vol.xxix, 1978, pp.348-51.

[49]Bill Williams, 'The Jewish immigrant in Manchester, the contribution of oral history', Oral History, vol.vii, no.1, 1979. For the earlier period see Bill Williams, The Making of Manchester Jewry. 1740-1875 (Manchester, 1976).

[50]Bill Williams, 'Minority expèrience in Manchester society: the Jewish example', paper presented at the Manchester History Workshop Day School, 'The Making of Manchester', 9th March 1985.

adherents, without much effect, to 'improve' socially and morally in order to rise up the social ladder. On the other, the Church looked darkly upon any form of social contact with non-Catholics and tried its best to prevent mixed marriages. Similarly, whereas it was a Church controlled, in the main, by enthusiastic English Conservatives and Imperialists who went out of their way to emphasis their patriotism, in the parishes Irish priests supported Home Rule and sometimes conducted Mass in Gaelic.

Perhaps, in the end, the most useful point in comparing the Irish with other, later, immigrants groups is that by so doing it can be shown that British, and particularly English, society has been culturally diverse for far longer than most contemporaries suppose.[51] As David Feldman has pointed out, an investigation of any minority within the British working class should also lead us to pose questions about the supposedly dominant characteristics of that class.[52]

As with most research projects this one has changed focus as the nature of sources, new interests and the constraints imposed by time moulded the course of work. It became necessary to broaden the focus to include English Catholics, and to refer to the lives of middle class Catholics. Nevertheless, the main purpose has been retained, indeed the social structure of the Irish Catholic population made this necessary. It remains primarily a study of the Irish Catholic working class in Manchester. There is little discussion of events in Ireland except when they intrude into Manchester affairs. There are,

---

[51]Raphael Samuel, 'The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish poor', in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City, p.290.

[52]Feldman, 'An Englishman', p.194.

however, references to the wider Irish diaspora, particularly the United States, although this is not intended to be systematic or comprehensive.[53] Unlike other works that deal with an earlier period it deliberately does not tackle the urbanisation of largely rural immigrants. This was the experience of a diminishing part of the population: most of those in Manchester who thought of themselves to be Irish and Catholics had been born in the city. In any case, the shock of encountering an urban society must have been an ever-diminishing aspect of the immigrant experience: Ireland was itself urbanising, English had reached even the most isolated of villages and contacts with England, by the 1940s at least, were common and almost everyday.[54]

---

[53]For a survey of the diaspora see Sheridan Gilley, 'The Roman Catholic Church and the ninteenth century Irish diaspora', Journal of Ecclesiatical History, vol.xxxv, 1984.

[54]Ronald Frankenberg, Communities in Britain. Social Life in Town and Country (1970), pp.25-45.

Chapter One. Immigration, Residence And Occupations.

1. Introduction.

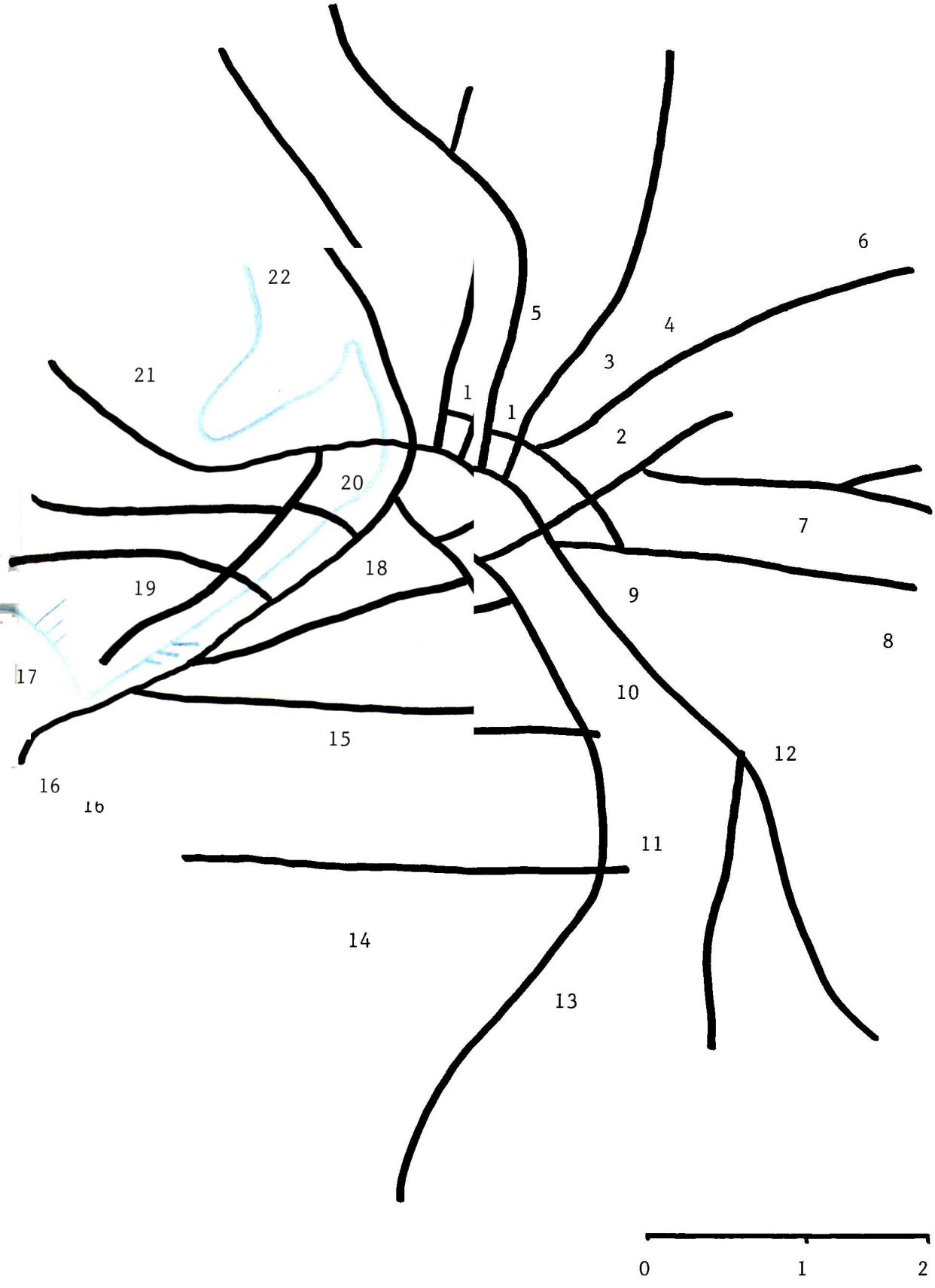
This chapter outlines the socio-economic character of Manchester's Irish Catholic population, serving as a necessary preliminary sketch for succeeding chapters. It begins by discussing what is precisely meant when reference is made to 'Irish Catholics'. It then goes on to measure the scale of immigration, describes population size, outlines the main areas of residence and finally assesses the changing nature of Irish and Catholic occupations.[1]

The evidence for the precise nature of the Irish and Catholic socio-economic profile is not as complete as it might be. Discussion is therefore subject to a number of qualifications. This is particularly due to the denial of access to Census enumerators' returns for the period after 1881. Only the eventual release of those returns will confirm or deny the picture presented here. Consequently, there is an enforced reliance upon sources - such as autobiography and oral history - whose precision is at its weakest in such matters. Fortunately, however, a number of local religious and occupational censuses give the picture more than a haphazard quality.

Reference is also made to the Irish in the United States in order to highlight the many shared experiences of the two immigrant groups and point to the distinctive characteristics of Manchester's Irish and Catholic population.

---

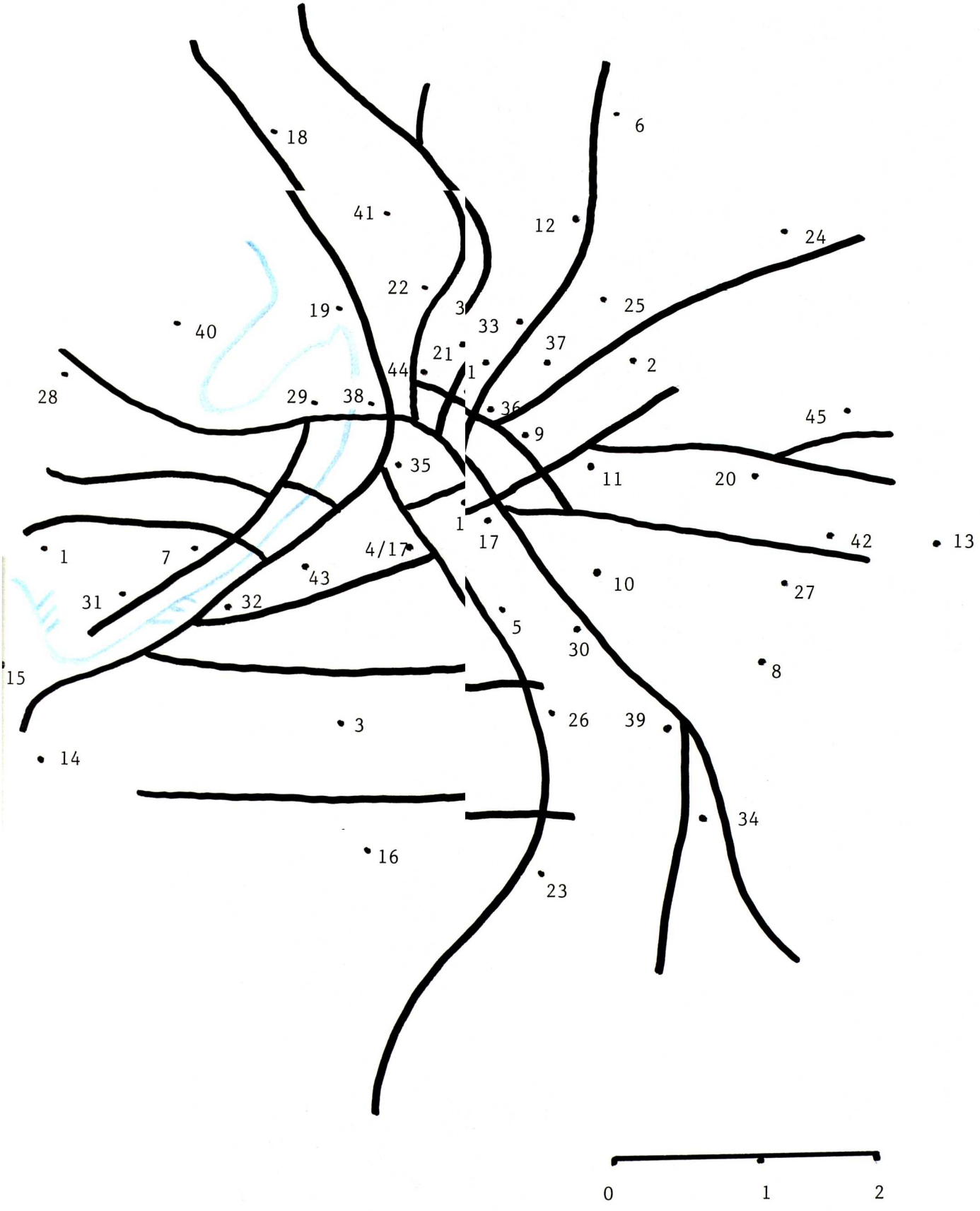
[1]For a brief summary of the general position of the Irish in the early part of this period see O'Tuathaigh, 'Irish in nineteenth century Britain', pp.15-19.



Map 1. The Main Districts of Manchester and Salford.

Key to Map 1.

1. Angel Meadow
2. Ancoats
3. Collyhurst
4. Miles Platting
5. Cheetham Hill
6. Moston
7. Openshaw
8. Gorton
9. Ardwick
10. Chorlton-on-Medlock
11. Rusholme
12. Longsight
13. Withington
14. Didsbury
15. Moss Side
16. Stretford
17. Trafford Park
18. Hulme
19. Ordsall
20. Greengate
21. Pendleton
22. Broughton



Map 2. Location of Catholic Churches.

Key to Map 2.

1. All Souls, Weaste
2. Corpus Christi, Miles Platting
3. English Martyrs', Alexandra Park
4. Holy Family, All Saints
5. Holy Name, Chorlton-on-Medlock
6. Mount Carmel, Blackley
7. Mount Carmel, Ordsall
8. Sacred Heart, Gorton
9. St.Alban's, Ancoats
10. St.Aloysius', Ardwick
11. St.Anne's, Ancoats
12. St.Anne's, Crumpsall
13. St.Anne's, Fairfield
14. St.Anne's, Stretford
15. St.Anthony's, Trafford Park
16. St.Augustine's, Chorlton-cum-Hardy
17. St.Augustine's, Chorlton-on-Medlock/All Saints*
18. St.Benedict's, Pendleton
19. St.Bonfiace's, Broughton
20. St.Bridget's, Bradford
21. St.Casimir's, Ancoats
22. St.Chad's, Cheetham Hill
23. St.Cuthbert's, Withington
24. St.Dunstan's, Moston
25. St.Edmund's, Miles Platting
26. St.Edward's, Rusholme
27. St.Francis', Gorton
28. St.James', Pendleton
29. St.John's, Chapel Street
30. St.Joseph's, Longsight
31. St.Joseph's, Ordsall
32. St.Lawrence's, Hulme
33. St.Malachy's, Collyhurst
34. St.Mary's, Levenshulme
35. St.Mary's, Manchester
36. St.Michael's, Ancoats
37. St.Patrick's, Ancoats
38. St.Peter's, Greengate
39. St.Robert's, Longsight
40. St.Sebastian's, Pendleton
41. St.Thomas', Broughton
42. St.Vincent's, Openshaw
43. St.Wilfrid's, Hulme
44. St.William's, Angel Meadow
45. St.Willibrod's, Clayton

* St.Augustine's church was relocated in the early 1900s.

2. An 'Irish Catholic' population.

It is not, at first glance, clear what is precisely meant by the term 'Irish Catholic': it could simply refer to those born in Ireland of Catholic parents. The definition used in this work is generous - 'Irish Catholic' refers both to those born Catholic in Ireland and to their Manchester-born descendants. They are the main focus. Although non-Irish Catholics and non-Catholic Irish are mentioned, this is only when their activities impinge on the lives of the city's Irish Catholics. In any case, most of Manchester's Catholics were of Irish origin, even if the line of descent was attenuated. The Irish Nationalist John Denvir suggested that of the city's 90,000 Catholics in 1881 80,000 were of Irish birth or extraction.[2] Contemporary Catholics and others also assumed that the Catholic population was predominantly 'Irish'.[3] It will be seen, however, that this somewhat overemphasised the Irish position.

According to the Catholic Church's own estimates in 1890 there were nearly 98,000 Catholics in Manchester and Salford. This amounted to fourteen per cent of the total population. By 1930 this number had risen to 130,000, whereas the proportion had fallen to twelve per cent.[4] This slight relative decline is probably accountable more to the extension of the city's boundaries than to any demographic trend. The number of Irish-born was always smaller than the Catholic population. In 1891 only 4.6 per cent of

---

[2]John Denvir, The Irish in Britain from Earliest Times to the Fall and Death of Parnell (1892), p.431.

[3]Harvest, January 1897, July 1899; Manchester City News [hereafter MCN], 22nd April 1899; Manchester Catholic Herald [hereafter MCH], 20th March 1920.

[4]Census of England and Wales, 1911, 1931. See Appendix 1.

Mancunians had been born in Ireland, a proportion which fell to 2.1 per cent by 1931.[5] To be a Catholic, therefore, did not automatically imply Irish birth. Purely 'English' Catholics were, however, a minority in Manchester. Somewhere in the past at least one antecedent was likely to have been Irish, for prior to the Irish influx there was but a handful of Catholics. However, most Catholics with only distant Irish ancestors - more than four generations away - probably considered themselves to be 'English'. Mary Bertenshaw's Catholic father, for example, did not consider it ironic when he nick-named one of their Irish lodgers 'Paddy'.[6] It was, however, common for those whose parents or grandparents were Irish-born to also see themselves as at least partly 'Irish'. Such an Irish 'patriotism' amongst the descendants of the Irish-born was noted by contemporaries as early as the 1840s.[7] In 1910 John Denvir suggested that

> generally, the children and grandchildren of Irish-born parents consider themselves just as much Irish as those born on "the old sod" itself.[8]

J.R.Clynes, born in Oldham the son of an evicted Irish farmer, called Ireland "my country" and claimed to be "half Irish and wholly Lancastrian."[9]

---

[5]See Appendix 2.

[6]Mary Bertenshaw, Sunrise to Sunset (Manchester, 1980), p.57.

[7]Wilson, Irish in Great Britain, p.130.

[8]John Denvir, The Life Story of an Old Rebel (Dublin, 1910), p.2. In 1922 the organisers of the first Tailteann Games, an Irish version of the Olympics, decided that a member of the "Irish race" had to have at least one Irish-born grandparent on both sides of the family. W.F.Mandle, The Gaelic Athletic Association and Irish Nationalist Politics, 1884-1924 (1987), pp.202-3.

[9]J.R.Clynes, Memoirs (1937), vol.i, p.27, 304.

Using American evidence it is possible to suggest that the effective Irish population, i.e. Irish-born plus those born to at least one Irish parent, was much higher than that indicated by the Census.[10] Accordingly the original figure for Irish-born should be at least doubled in 1900 and trebled in 1920 in order to arrive at a more realistic estimate of the 'Irish' population. This is roughly in line with John Denvir's calculation that, although there were only 212,350 Irish-born in Lancashire in 1881 there were as many as 500,000 who thought themselves to be 'Irish'.[11] Taking all this into account Manchester's 'Irish' population was much more impressive than it at first appears. On the basis of these conservative, and admittedly somewhat arbitrary, calculations it is likely that in 1891 something more than 10 per cent and in 1931 at least 5 per cent of Mancunians considered themselves 'Irish'.

Manchester was geographically too close to Ireland for that country to be easily forgotten by immigrants. It is perhaps significant that Manchester was the first British city to be visited by Jim Larkin during his attempt to raise funds for the 1911 Dublin strike.[12] Politically Ireland intruded into the city's own concerns: Home Rule dominated the horizons of many second and third generation Irish. Those of Irish descent could even visit their country of origin at little expense. As a consequence, for a number of Manchester-born 'Irish' Ireland was much more than a second-hand memory. Before 1914 at least one Hulme boy went to Ireland to gain

---

[10]Stephan Thernstrom (ed.), The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), p.528, Table 2.

[11]Denvir, Irish in Britain, p.430.

[12]Arnold Wright, Disturbed Dublin (1914), pp.171-2.

an education at his mother's old college.[13] During this period the Nationalist Frank J.Farley, although born just off Manchester's Rochdale Road, also sent his son to an Irish college.[14] Irish-born parents, usually the mother, often kept contact with relatives in the old country and during the summer children accompanied them on extended visits. One respondent returned to Ireland as her mother was seriously ill to be cared for by her grandmother.[15] English mothers with relatives in 'the country' shared this practice of returning home with their children during summer months.[16] Manchester's importance as a marketing centre meant that the large number of Irish provisions dealers, if for reasons of business alone, maintained a connection with their homeland. The prominent Nationalist Patrick Hickey, who dealt in vegetables, kept an office in Limerick.[17] One respondent's Irish grandfather, a farmer, came to visit Manchester every Christmas when he brought over his geese and chickens with which he supplied T.Q.Ruddin, another Nationalist merchant.[18] Geography also meant that many seasonal Irish agricultural workers passed through the city on the way to farm work.[19] This possibly explains why many male immigrants to the city

---

[13]Manchester Studies Oral History Collection, Manchester Polytechnic [hereafter MS], tape 507.

[14]Manchester Faces and Places [hereafter MFP], vol.xvi, 1905.

[15]MS, tapes 794 and 271.

[16]MS, tape 484.

[17]MCH, 20th January 1923.

[18]MS, tape 794.

[19]'The Coming of the Irish Harvester', c.late 1890s, "Manchester" cuttings collection, Local History Department, Manchester Public Library, [hereafter LHD].

had previously been harvesters. Those who could afford it also returned to Ireland to live in retirement after earning their living or making their reputation in the city. Mr.Donohue, a Collyhurst grocer, retired to run a hotel in Killarney.[20] Dan Boyle, leader of Manchester's Irish Nationalists, bought a house in County Dublin after resigning from the city Council.[21]

This was by no means an homogeneous population: if many descendants felt they were partly Irish some regarded themselves to be more 'Irish' than others. A rivalry existed between those who claimed to be fully Irish and those merely born of Irish parents. In 1910 J.A.Kelly complained that he was derided by members of his local United Irish League branch because he spoke without a brogue, which he dismissively described as "spitting pieces of bog turf".[22] These ambiguities of 'national sentiment' have been vividly recorded by Pat O'Mara who was raised in Liverpool. During his Irish grandfather's wake his aunt asked her mother

> "Would you like to see Ireland again before you go, mother?"
> "No," scowled my grandmother, "I remember nothin' in it but poverty!" The tears came faster. "I'd like to go maybe to St.Steven's Green where your father and me played as childer - but that's about all. Ireland! Don't talk to me about Ireland. Your father's an Irishman - see what he done! God have mercy on his soul!"
> Then Lonnigan, wiping his beer from his mustache, said: "Mrs.Molloy, Ireland would be all right if she was left alone, It's England ..."
> "What do you know about Ireland - born in Manchester as ye was!"
> "That's all right, Mrs.Molloy, but I'm an Irishman just the same!"

---

[20] Mary Turner (ed.), Collyhurst Then, p.27, unpublished, available LHD.

[21] MCH, 10th December 1917.

[22] MCH, 12th November 1910.

"Arra g'wane! Shut your bloody mouth Joe Lonnigan, don't argue with me now!"[23]

O'Mara, himself English-born, continually referred to Lonnigan as merely "the alleged Irishman".[24] Robert Roberts has also suggested that Irish families long-established in the life of the slum disliked the influx of "raw compatriots". The former's ignorance of urban ways often badly reflected upon these 'integrated' Irish.[25]

Intermarriage between Irish and English, Catholic and non-Catholic, only made these identities more confused. John Tomlinson's example makes the basis of any ambiguities of identity quite obvious. His paternal grandfather was born a Protestant, his grandmother a Catholic, and although his father was raised as a Protestant his mother was also a Catholic. Tomlinson was subsequently brought up within Catholicism, into which his father was eventually drawn, whilst even his grandfather came round and on his deathbed converted to Rome.[26] It seems that marriage was more likely to occur between those nationalities sharing the same religion than between religious groups. For example, it was a regular occurrence for the men in Anthony Burgess's self-consciously English Catholic family to marry Irish girls, something his father did in his second marriage.[27]

---

[23]Pat O'Mara, The Autobiography of a Liverpool Irish Slummy (1934), pp.111-12.

[24]O'Mara, Slummy, p.110

[25]Robert Roberts, Classic Slum (1983), p.110.

[26]Turner, Collyhurst, p.21.

[27]Anthony Burgess, Little Wilson and Big God. Being the First Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess (1987), p.9, 22.

The similarities between Irish-born and the remainder of working class Catholics were, nevertheless, greater than their differences. They not only shared a common religion, but many of them also held in common a consciousness of their distinct national origin. If recent Irish immigrants were wary of the English, they were more inclined to turn to Catholics for friendship.[28] A number of descendants retained their parents' brogue. The politician Dan Boyle, for example, although born in Stockport and raised in Ancoats, still spoke with his parents' Irish accent.[29] Some Irish-born, however, especially those with lower middle class ambitions, such insurance salesmen, thought it wise to lose their accent in order to win promotion.[30]

A Catholic born in Manchester was, therefore, likely to be raised in a family which could trace at least some of its more recent roots back to Ireland. There was a self-consciously English Catholic minority in the city, a significant number of the clergy being drawn from this group. However, there appears to have been few such working class adherents. Therefore, although the Irish failed to win control of the institution of the Catholic Church they certainly gave Manchester's popular Catholicism a green tinge. This shared national origin was powerful enough to be exploited even for mundane commercial purposes: in 1934 the Manchester Catholic Herald contained an advertisement which implored its readers to eat only Irish turkeys during the Christmas holiday.[31]

---

[28] MS, tape 87.

[29] MCN, 13th January 1912.

[30] MS, tape 85(1).

[31] MCH, 18th December 1934.

3. Immigration and the immigrant.

Very few Catholics resided in the Manchester area prior to the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Although Lancashire had a considerable indigenous Catholic population it was mainly found on the county's western coastal plain rather than along its eastern Pennine boundary. Unlike towns such as Preston and Wigan Manchester's indigenous Catholic tradition effectively ended with the Reformation.[32] In 1690 a mere two Catholics lived in the city.[33] As late as 1767 there were only 351.[34] The rapid increase in Catholics was a direct result of Manchester's expansion during the Industrial Revolution which drew in substantial numbers of Irish immigrants.[35] They quickly established their presence in Lancashire's industrial capital and many of the region's lesser towns. During the mid-nineteenth century the attractive 'pull' of better job opportunities was supplemented by the terrifying 'push' of the Irish Famine. Consequently, in the late 1840s and early 1850s Manchester was inundated by desperately poor Irish families. The 1851 Census registered the peak of this influx - 44,105 people living in the city were Irish-born, 16.6 per cent of Manchester's population and 8.7 per cent of Salford's.[36] In terms of relative size the Irish-born population began to decline in the late 1850s. During the third

---

[32]John Bossy, The English Catholic Community, 1550-1850 (1975), p.303, 309.

[33]Harvest, December, 1912.

[34]Bossy, Community, p.424, Table IV.

[35]Connolly, Catholicism in Manchester and Salford, pp.63-5.

[36]Bossy, Community, p.424.

quarter of the century the slackening pace of Lancashire's industrialisation was coupled with the stabilisation of Irish agriculture. The 'push' and 'pull' lost most of their original power so that between 1851 and 1891 the proportion of Irish-born in the city declined by three quarters. A slower decline in Irish numbers continued throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century. When the second wave of Irish immigrants to Britain began in the 1930s it was clear that they were not heading for the depressed cotton towns of Lancashire, but preferred London and the expanding industries of the west Midlands.[37] Therefore, between 1891 and 1931 the proportion of Manchester's Irish-born more than halved.

Irish immigrants differed in a number ways from the rest of the population. The 1871 Census showed that they were younger. It recorded that 56 per cent of Irish men and 48 per cent of Irish women in Angel Meadow, north Manchester were between 20 and 44 years of age.[38] This pattern was largely the same in 1951 when 56 per cent of all female and 48 per cent of all male Irish immigrants to Britain were between 20 and 39 years old.[39] Youth was also one of the defining characteristics of Irish immigrants in the United States. In the period 1901-11 83 per cent of the Irish-born were under 35 years.[40] The era of mass family emigration, which occurred during the

---

[37]Sean Glynn, 'Irish immigration to Britain, 1911-51: patterns and policy', Irish Economic and Social History, vol.viii, 1981, pp.57-8; Jackson, Irish in Britain, p.13, 15-17.

[38]Irene Babcock, Angel Meadow: a Study of a Migrant Community in Victorian Manchester, unpublished B.A. dissertation, 1980, Manchester Polytechnic, p.59, table 24.

[39]Jackson, Irish in Britain, p.19.

[40]Thernstrom, Encyclopedia, p.529.

worst period of the Famine, had ended by the 1860s. The typical form of immigration during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was that of the lone young man or woman.

As in the United States the relative youth of the Irish was partnered by a remarkable balance in the proportion of male and female immigrants.[41] This probably accounted for the great incidence of exclusively Irish marriages.[42] The youth of immigrants also suggests that the Irish-born were very likely to be one of the most fecund members of Manchester's population.

Irish immigrants were a distinctive group within the city's population in terms of occupation as well as age. At least in the initial phase of their residence in the city, they were employed in jobs which were lowly paid and required little skill. This was the case for many Irish immigrants in the United States where they were also over-represented amongst the unskilled.[43]

Many young Irish girls came to Manchester to be employed either as domestic servants or as general menial workers, such as barmaids and cleaners. These were jobs which all but the poorest English members of their sex refused. Elsie Osman has recalled that a large number of Irish girls employed at the Ladywell Sanatorium were lowly maids rather than nurses. The Sanatorium dealt with infectious diseases and because of the nature of the work it required staff to

---

[41]Thernstrom, Encyclopedia, p.529.

[42]David Fitzpatrick, 'Irish emigration in the later nineteenth century', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xxii, no.86, 1982, pp.136-7.

[43]Stephan Thernstrom, The Other Bostonians. Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970 (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), pp.134-5, 139-40.

live in. Amongst employees there was a high mortality rate.[44] Like many English girls from similar rural backgrounds, they were especially attracted to service because the employer provided a place to live.[45] Girls from Manchester, as in other industrial towns, were unwilling to become servants because there were better paid occupations, with more status and freedom, to be found in the city.[46] It was quite common for Irish girls to gain jobs through family already established in the city, either by directly replacing a sister or simply being informed of a vacancy.[47] Similarly, it was not unusual for young male immigrants to be given jobs through family contacts.[48] A 1928 survey revealed just how few Irish immigrants relied upon local Employment Exchanges in Liverpool, Manchester and Salford.[49] They quite obviously still found them informally through personal contacts.

Irish men seemed somewhat more independent than the women, having prefaced their journey to Manchester with at least one summer's work as a harvester in Britain.[50] After this 'apprenticeship' it was usual for them to come to the city in the

---

[44]Elsie Osman, Salford Stepping Stones (Swinton, 1983), pp.51-2.

[45]MS, tapes 1024 and 266.

[46]Mark Ebery and Brian Preston, Domestic Service in Late Victorian England, 1871 - 1914, Geographical Papers, number 42 (University of Reading, 1976), pp.74-8.

[47]MS, Crawley transcript and tape 273.

[48]MS, tape 122(2).

[49]Memo by the Home Secretary, Appendix C, 20th February 1929, Public Record Office [hereafter PRO], CAB/24/201/45.

[50]MS, tapes 85(1) and 122(1).

capacity of general labourer. They often worked for a building contractor, the Corporation or in the city's Smithfield market. Some, however, used to advantage what skills their rural backgrounds had given them. Mike Lally's father, for example, traded in horses and donkeys at the Great Ancoats Street horse market before finally becoming a market porter.[51] These jobs did not provide board and male immigrants, therefore, predominantly lived in the many lodging houses which almost exclusively catered for the Irish.[52]

4. Areas of residence.

Irish residence within Manchester was relatively stable. Parts of the city described by Engels in the 1840s as 'Irish' retained much of their character until the 1950s. What were by the late nineteenth century the mainly slum districts of Ancoats and, to a lesser extent, Hulme were the most popular areas of Irish settlement. By the turn of the century 'Irish', 'Catholic' and 'poor' neighbourhoods were almost always considered in the same breath.[53]

The Salford Diocesan Almanac published annual estimates of the size of parochial populations which allow for a reconstruction of the total size and distribution of the city's Catholic population. A Diocesan census undertaken in 1900 provides an even better idea of how concentrated this population was in certain districts. These calculations were based upon the parish priest's own estimate of the

---

[51]Sue Richardson (ed.), The Recollections of Three Manchesters in the Great War (Swinton, 1985), p.4.

[52]MS, tapes 823(1) 1024 and 122(1).

[53]A glance at the map of the city's slum areas enclosed in T.R.Marr, Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford (Manchester, 1904) shows how bad was the housing in areas where Irish Catholics mainly lived.

number and proportion of Catholics living within his district. Their conclusions are confirmed by a small number of independent religious censuses conducted between the late nineteenth century and the 1930s. Unfortunately no census was conducted in this period which noted nationality.

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries about one seventh of the total population of Manchester was Catholic. They were not, however, evenly distributed about the city. The Almanac shows that in 1890 just over 37,000 Catholics lived in the seven parishes which lay in what was the mainly working class part of north Manchester containing Ancoats, Angel Meadow, Collyhurst and Miles Platting. This accounted for 38 per cent of the city's total Catholic population.[54] The 1900 census, upon which Table 1 is derived, indicates that just over one-fifth (22 per cent) of the total population of this district was was Catholic. This proportion varied considerably from parish to parish on the basis that, generally, the poorer the area the more Catholics there were. For example, the population living within the bounds of St.William's in the infamous slum district of Angel Meadow was 50 per cent Catholic whereas in the more prosperous working class area of Miles Platting both the parishes of Corpus Christi and St.Edmund's registered figures of less than 20 per cent.

---

[54]See Appendix 1, Table 2.

Table 1. The proportion of Catholics in seven north Manchester parishes, 1900.[55]

Parish	Catholics	Total	% Catholics
St.William's	2000	4000	50
St.Patrick's	12000	30000	40
St.Alban's	900	3000	30
St.Michael's	2318	10000	23
St.Anne's	6000	35000	17
Corpus Christi	3057	20000	15
St.Edmund's	5400	45000	12
Total	31675	147000	22

Large numbers of Catholics also lived in other working class areas near to the city centre. Independent censuses for both Chorlton-on-Medlock in the early 1900s and Hulme in 1927 show the Catholic population to be around the 30 per cent mark.These and other surveys are summarised in Table 2. The 1900 census also revealed that the middle class suburbs of Stretford, Withington and Chorlton-cum-Hardy, which lay to the south of the city, had a very small number of Catholics. Along their prosperous avenues fewer than 5 per cent of inhabitants were Catholic, many of whom would probably have been female domestic servants rather than members of the middle class.[56]

---

[55]Taken from Appendix 3, Table 1.

[56]See Appendix 3, Table 1.

Table 2. The proportion of Catholics in certain districts of Manchester, from the late nineteenth century to 1939.[57]

District	Date	% Catholics
Angel Meadow	'Late C19th'	56
Chorlton-on-Medlock	'Early C20th'	28
Hulme	1927	36
Ancoats	1937	30
Ancoats	1938	46
Moston	1939	30

By the late 1930s the Catholic population was somewhat more dispersed. In 1939 less than 29,000 Catholics (23 per cent of the city's total) lived in the seven north Manchester parishes. The proportion of Catholics in this area, as indicated in Table 2, nevertheless remained constant at around 30 per cent. The decline in the concentration of Catholics was probably due to the general effect of slum clearance which was concentrated in this area prior to World War Two.[58] It was unlikely that the dispersal of population was the result of any specifically Catholic social 'improvement'. This was similar to the position in Bolton where old 'Irish' areas were partially redeveloped in the late 1930s but only substantially so after 1945.[59] For this reason areas of the most concentrated Catholic numbers had undergone a more rapid decline in population

---

[57]Summarised from Appendix 3, Tables 2-7.

[58]D.Barber, School Accomodation Problems in Manchester 1919-39, M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1960, p.107. W.Whalley, An Historical Account of Catholic Education in England with Special Reference to Educational Activities in the Salford Diocese, M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1938, p.395.

[59]Bronwen Mary Walter, The Geography of Irish Migration to Britain since 1939, with Special Reference to Luton and Bolton, unpublished Ph.D., University of Oxford, 1978, pp.401-2.

than other districts since at least 1900.[61] The flight of the skilled working class, in the wake of the middle class, further and further away from the city's centre is also of significance. In Hulme this shift in population was noted as early as 1906.[62] The small number of prosperous Catholics followed suit and in 1913 St.Wilfrid's parochial Association of the Ladies of St.Vincent de Paul, an organisation for philanthropic women, was forced to disband because most members had left the area.[63] Generally, however, when Catholics moved into a district in large numbers it was an indication that the area was already in social decline. For example, in 1900 members of the Holy Name parish, Chorlton-on-Medlock were in the main professionals, clerks and shopkeepers.[64] By the middle 1920s the area was experiencing a fall in social character associated with a rapid increase in the number of Catholics within the parish.[65]

If evidence for the location of Catholics is somewhat sketchy, then that for the Irish-born is even more ill-defined. It seems clear, however, that areas with a concentrated Catholic presence also contained the most Irish. St.Patrick's, the city's largest Catholic parish, had a reputation for being a vigorously Irish church. Similarly in 1871 one third of Angel Meadow's population was Irish-born.[66] Prior to 1914 the neighbouring north Manchester wards

---

[61]Map 're. traffic problems', Manchester City Council Reports (1911).

[62]Manchester Guardian, [hereafter MG], 15th, 18th October 1906.

[63]Catholic Federationist, [hereafter CF], May 1913.

[64]MS, tape 268(2).

[65]Holy Name Messenger, January 1929.

[66]Babcock, Angel Meadow, p.47. Table 18.

of St.Michael's and New Cross, both located at the foot of Rochdale Road and Oldham Road, were usually represented by Irish Nationalists. This was an area famous for its large Irish population, and in 1887 it was suggested that three times more Irish lived there than in the rest of Manchester.[67] St.Michael's in particular continued to be exclusively represented by Irish Catholic councillors well into the 1930s.

In general the poor lived where the poor had always lived, and Catholics were disproportionately poor. Poverty prevented them affording the higher rents of better houses further from the city's dirty centre. Increased transport costs could not be met by an unskilled worker whose livelihood was found only in the precincts of the slum. The small amount of new council housing built after World War One was, therefore, beyond their reach. Moreover, the Council imposed impediments of its own in order to restrict tenancy to skilled workers.[68] It is, therefore, very likely that the Irish and Catholic population was - for economic reasons alone - the most residentially static element of Manchester's working class.

---

[67]'The Irish in Manchester (by one of them)', 1887, 'Manchester' cuttings collection, LHD.

[68]Manchester University Settlement [hereafter MUS], Social Studies of a Manchester City Ward. 2. Housing Conditions in Ancoats (Manchester, 1928), p.21; MUS, 3. Housing Needs of Ancoats in Relation to the Greenwood Act (Manchester, 1930), pp.9-11; Manchester Women's History Group, 'Women and housing in interwar Manchester', paper presented at Manchester History Workshop Day School, 3rd May 1986.

5. Occupations and poverty.

The most difficult aspect of the Irish and Catholic socio-economic profile to uncover was their occupational structure. The absence of the Census leaves a gaping hole to be filled. However, autobiography and oral history do at least give a consistent, if hazy, picture. Moreover, they confirm each other not only in relation to the general nature of skill required, but also the particular tasks themselves. Apart from an enforced lack of precision and detail, there is a more important weakness. Although it is possible to gain a general idea of what jobs Irish and Catholics had, somewhere between 1900 and 1930, movements into or out of particular trades over time cannot be traced. We cannot, as Lynn Lees has done with the aid of the 1851 and 1861 Censuses, chart a social 'improvement' over the generations with any degree of confidence.[69]

Manchester's economy was much more diverse than those of the cotton towns by which it was surrounded. Since the 1850s cotton had declined as the city's metropolitan function increased. By 1928 only 3 per cent of Lancashire's looms were found there.[70] As a consequence the city was better able to sustain itself through the series of interwar depressions which afflicted the county's staple industry.[71] Although taken as a whole Manchester's occupational structure was diverse many districts in the city were dominated by one particular

---

[69]Lees, Exiles, pp.106-22.

[70]H.Clay and K.R.Brady, Manchester at Work. A Survey (Manchester, 1929), p.91; John K.Walton, Lancashire. A Social and Economic History 1558-1939 (Manchester, 1987), pp.208-9.

[71]Economic Research Section, University of Manchester, Re-Adjustment in Lancashire (Manchester, 1936), p.7, 37-8.

trade or set of trades.[72] In the north eastern areas of Gorton and Openshaw heavy engineering was predominant, in Trafford Park after 1914 electrical engineering and car production were important whereas in Ordsall the docks and in Cheetham Hill the clothing trades were especially crucial.[73]

In the city's inner districts, principally those of Ancoats and Hulme, unskilled non-factory labour was most common. These areas contained a multiplicity of small trades as well as the city's declining number of cotton mills.[74] By the 1930s Hulme and Ancoats formed the larger part of a slum belt in which about 80,000 people lived in deteriorating housing stock.[75] As has been shown, it was in these places that the Irish and many of their descendants mainly lived and worked. St.Michael's ward, the Irish ward of this period, was described in 1904 as "a district of dull, depressing streets in which are crowded together the homes of market porters and other labouring men."[76] Capital had been flowing out of these parts of the city to its expanding periphery since the late nineteenth century. Ancoats, which had once served as Manchester's workshop, had become in Charles Rowley's phrase a Klondike with all the gold mined out.[77] Here poverty - and after 1918 unemployment - were most

---

[72]Post Office inquiry, LAB 2/1555/CLSL 117/1907, PRO.

[73]Clay and Brady, Manchester at Work, p.32, 108-18.

[74]For a description of these areas see MUS, Housing Conditions in Ancoats; John Inman, Poverty and Housing. Conditions in a Manchester City Ward (1934).

[75]E.D.Simon and J.Inman, The Rebuilding of Manchester (1935), pp.58-68.

[76]MG, 21st October 1904.

[77]Charles Rowley, Fifty Years of Ancoats Loss and Gain (1899), p.4; Rowley, Fifty Years of Work Without Wages (1912), p.196.

concentrated.[78] One 1930s survey of Ancoats disclosed that half of the families contacted had an income of less than 40 shillings a week.[79] Another discovered that 40 per cent of all adult males were unemployed and that one quarter of families contained no wage earner.[80] In Hulme the situation was so bad that one grocer's weekly turnover had dropped from £80 in easier times to £13.[81]

It was a commonplace amongst contemporaries, whether friend or foe, that the Irish and Catholic population was largely composed of unskilled workers who were a disproportionate burden upon the Poor Law.[82] The number of skilled working class, lower middle class and professional middle class Irish Catholics was said to be very small, whereas the upper middle class was almost non-existent.[83] This impression is borne out by residence patterns - Catholics mainly lived in working class districts. The Irish Catholic occupational structure of the 1900s appears to have shared a number of characteristics with that of the middle nineteenth century. Many of the unskilled occupations were, in fact, identical: a large proportion of street traders, building labourers, gas workers and

---

[78]Mary Stocks, Fifty Years of Every Street (1945), p.55.

[79]MUS, Ancoats. A Study of a Clearance Area (Manchester, 1945), p.15.

[80]Inman, Poverty and Housing, pp.12-14.

[81]Mick Jenkins, What Next for Manchester? (Manchester, 1938), p.7.

[82]Harvest, July, 1899; St.Wilfrid's Parish Magazine, February, 1912.

[83]MCN, 22nd April 1899.

stallholders were Irish Catholics.[84] There were certainly changes, but - as with residence - the commanding feature was one of immobility.

Only during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were the Irish particularly associated with one of Manchester's skilled trades. This was a time when Irish handloom weavers, facing the contraction of their domestic industry, travelled to Manchester to meet an increasing demand for their specialised labour. By the 1820s, however, the power loom had devalued their skills and weavers were amongst the poorest members of the working class. It was also the time when the stream of poor and unskilled rural Irish labourers began to appear more as a flood.[85]

The nature of Irish immigration into Manchester after 1840 dictated their descendants' subsequent social trajectory in the years after 1890. The Irish came as paupers and, by and large, their offspring remained poor. Some of those most capable left for the United States, where their more prosperous countrymen had already settled. The Nationalist movement lost a number of its activists in this manner.[86] Mick Burke's Irish-born father first came to Manchester then left his newly-established family behind when he crossed the Atlantic in search of work. Failing in this mission he

---

[84]For a general account, Brock, Irish Immigrants into the Manchester District.

[85]J.H.Treble, The Place of the Irish Catholics in the Social Life of the North of England, 1829-51, unpublished Ph.D., 1968, University of Leeds, pp.2-20.

[86]For the departure of J.D.Reilly, president of the 'Father Sheehy' UIL branch, St.Wilfrid's Parish Magazine, May 1911. A few years earlier the secretary of the 'Father Mather' UIL branch had also left for the United States, MCH, 5th April 1907.

soon returned to the city.[87] Even in the 'Land of Opportunity' social advance was slow with no ineluctable progress up the social ladder.[88] This social immobility has been charted for the middle of the nineteenth century by Lynn Lees, who noted only a modest degree of improvement in the occupations held by the Irish-born. Yet, this was the time when the greatest leap upwards should have occurred: the 1851 Census recorded the largest influx of the poorest immigrants. From the depths of poverty the Irish could only move upwards, which they did, but only painfully slowly.[89] Once established within Britain the poor Irish found themselves in a society in which upward mobility was quite rare. Class boundaries were rigid and rarely crossed except by the most exceptional of individuals whether they were Protestant, Catholic, English or Irish. As a consequence Manchester's unskilled accepted and glorified their inevitable subordination.[90] This appears to have also been the reason underlying their slow progress in the United States.[91] Therefore, it was for reasons of class, and in spite of intensive efforts by the Church to 'improve' them, rather than reasons unique to themselves, that most Irish and their descendants remained where they had begun - at the bottom. In the years immediately prior to World War One the Catholic

---

[87]Mick Burke, Ancoats Lad (Swinton, 1985), p.3.

[88]Stephan Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress. Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), p.157.

[89]Lees, Exiles, pp.116-22.

[90]Roberts, Slum, p.17.

[91]Thernstrom, Other Bostonians, pp.133-5; Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress, pp.200-01.

Federationist recognized that Catholics still suffered from the consequences of their immigrant antecedents' lowly social position which condemned them to "dull, sordid poverty."[92]

Areas of most common employment can be briefly outlined. Smithfield market, "the great emporium of Lancashire", served a population of about eight million people. Covering nearly five acres of land it dominated Ancoats's local economy, especially in those areas where the Irish were most concentrated.[93] It also provided a livelihood for all sections of the Irish and Catholic population: merchants, stallholders, porters and general labourers. A significant proportion of Nationalist leaders were wholesale importers of Irish poultry, game and dairy produce, which was shipped direct through the Manchester Ship Canal.[94] In all of Smithfield's departments a large numbers of tenants were Irish Catholics. A 1906 Manchester Catholic Herald survey estimated that one-fifth of fishmarket stallholders were Catholic.[95] They were generously represented amongst the stallholders in near-by Hanging Ditch market.[96] The markets also provided employment for a large number of porters and labourers, many of whom were of Irish descent.[97]

---

[92] CF, June 1912, July 1913.

[93] MFP, vol.x, 1899.

[94] MCH, 22nd February 1908; MCN, 22nd April 1899.

[95] MCH, 26th January, 2nd February 1906.

[96] MG, 17th April 1908.

[97] MCN, 26th September 1891.

An army of street traders and hawkers were also reliant upon the market, and many of these were Irish.[98] In 1904 St.Michael's ward contained more than three times more such people (17 per cent of the population) than Ancoats as a whole.[99] Activity of this sort was more an indication of poverty then of enterprise: the family could be used as cheap labour. As a child Mick Burke helped his Irish mother eke out a living selling rabbits and fish on the streets. Her sister, being slightly more prosperous, sold vegetables from a stall.[100] The Irish had always been involved in this part of the economy: as early as the mid-1830s 75 per cent of Manchester's stallholders were Irish-born.[101] In Glasgow, too, the Irish were associated with this lowly form of retailing.[102] The street was also the arena for a number of Irish street entertainers. It was not uncommon to hear renderings of 'Poor Robert Emmet', 'Southdown Militia' and 'Take Me Home Cathleen' echoing around Manchester's poorer districts.[103]

Irish labour, as in the United States, was also prominent in public service, particularly transport.[104] Such jobs did not require much skill but they did offer a degree of security, albeit with low

---

[98] MS tape 87.

[99] See Appendix 4 Tables 1 and 2.

[100] Burke, Ancoats, p.4, 43.

[101] Treble, Place, p.85.

[102] Moira MacAskill, Paddy's Market, Centre for Urban and Regional Research Discussion Paper 29 (University of Glasgow, 1987).

[103] Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.57; MS, tape 821.

[104] Edward M.Levine, The Irish and the Irish Politician (Notre Dame, 1966), pp.112-13.

pay. From at least the 1890s Manchester's expanding tramways service provided employment for a large number of Irishmen.[105] So many found a job with the trams that some Conservatives claimed that Dan Boyle, the Irish Chairman of the Corporation's Tramways Committee between 1898 and 1906, pursued a policy of favouritism. This was motivated more by political spite than concern for the truth. The concentration of Irish numbers in this area was, in fact, due to two general factors. The first was the proximity of the Queens Road and Hyde Road tramsheds to the main areas of Irish settlement. The second factor was the unskilled nature of the work. This was why the Irish were prominent employees of Boston's street-car companies during the middle nineteenth century, dominated Philadelphia's transportation system by 1910 and why in the 1930s over half of New York's transport workers were Irish-born.[106] Large numbers continued to be employed in Manchester's public transport sector during the interwar period. This was why the Catholic Transport Guild was founded in the city in the late 1920s. A large number of policeman in Ancoats prior to 1914 were also said to be Irish.[107] At least during the late nineteenth century a disproportionate number of these were Ulster Protestants but it seems likely that the Catholic

---

[105] MCH, 19th October 1906, 25th March 1922; MS, tape 794.

[106] Levine Irish Politicians, p.144; Dennis M.Clarke, The Irish in Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1973), p.146; Joshua B.Freeman, 'Irish workers in the twentieth century United States: the case of the Transport Workers Union', Saothar, no.8, 1982, pp.25-6.

[107] Frank Doran, Down Memory Lane, unpublished, page unnumbered, available LHD.

element increased over time.[108] Andrew Cathcart and Thomas Cassidy, Irish Catholic councillors who represented St.Michael's ward for Labour during the interwar period, were both former policemen.

By no means all Irish Catholics were poor nor inevitably locked within lowly working class occupations.[109] The Irish publican remained a common and powerful figure within the Irish Catholic domain. Similarly, there had always been a number of Irish shopkeepers in the nineteenth century. They were largely found in the poorest districts and said to be mainly occupied in the less respectable trades, such as second-hand clothes dealing.[110] By the turn of the century a more prosperous and firmly established shopkeeping class had emerged as in other Lancastrian towns.[111] Substantial grocers, such as Hugh Fay of Ancoats, were indicative of this process.[112] Such retailers moved upward and outward. Mary O'Brien, a member of St.William's Children of Mary, owned a shop amidst the slums of Angel Meadow prior to the First World War and during most of the interwar period. About 1940 her family bought a shop in more comfortable Ardwick and after 1945 her daughter became Secretary of the Longsight Traders' Association.[113] By the early 1900s a

---

[108]S.J.Davies, 'Classes and the police in Manchester, 1829-1880' in Alan J.Kidd and K.W.Roberts (eds.), City, Class and Culture (Manchester, 1985), p.34.

[109]For a brief survey of the Irish Catholic 'elite', MS, tapes 87 and 271.

[110]'Irish in Manchester', cuttings, LHD.

[111]For the emergence of a group of prosperous Catholic families in Bolton, Walter, Bolton, pp.397-8.

[112]MS, tape 518.

[113]Deposit M278, /5/3, /6/5,6,10, Manchester Archives Department, Manchester Central Library [hereafter MAD].

significant group of Catholic skilled workers had been formed, many of whom constituted the core of the original Catholic Federation. The Catenian Association, which was formed in the city in 1908, was a body which aimed to further commercial cooperation between members of Manchester's emerging Catholic middle class. It comprised 'business' rather than 'professional' men, those particularly involved in printing, textiles and building.[114]

Both the labour movement and the Catholic Church provided restricted avenues for upward mobility. J.R.Clynes and Joe Toole, Labour M.P.s during this period, benefited from trade union and party office. The Church also recruited a large number of school teachers and assistants from the Catholic working class. Anthony Burgess's two plumbing uncles seemed to specialise in installing lavatories in presbyteries.[115] Irish immigrants also continued to provide a steady income for the considerable number of Catholic lodging house keepers. On a slightly grander level the Catenians asked Bishop Casartelli to persuade Catholic architects responsible for building parish schools to put any business in their members' direction.[116]

The majority of Catholics, nevertheless, remained part of the poorest element of the working class. Consequently, they relied more than the rest of the population upon the Poor Law and were over-represented in the prisons. Religious creed registers for Manchester Township's workhouse, summarised in Table 3, clearly show

---

[114]Peter Lane, The Catenian Association, 1908-83, (1982), pp.18-19.

[115]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.14.

[116]Lane, Catenians, p.19.

the extent of Catholic poverty.[117] The Township contained within its bounds all of Ancoats, Angel Meadow and Collyhurst, parts of the city where Catholics formed about one third of the population. An inspection of the register reveals that between 1881 and 1914 Catholics, on average, accounted for 50 per cent of inmates.

Table 3. Religion of inmates of New Bridge Street Workhouse, 1881-1914.

	Catholics	Total	% Catholics
1881-9	1750	3396	52
1891-9	2913	5702	51
1900-9	2042	4339	47
1912-14	695	1409	49
Total	7400	14846	50

Throughout this period, as the above Table shows, there was no variation of significance in the proportion of Catholic inmates. There was, in fact, only a marginal improvement over time, with the proportion of Catholics falling from 52 per cent in 1881-9 to 47 per cent in 1900-09. On the eve of the First World War, however, the average had crept back up to 49 per cent. This picture is confirmed by the Diocesan census of 1900 which included workhouses in parts of the city where there were considerably fewer Catholics. Of Salford workhouse's inmates 22 per cent were Catholic, whereas 22 per cent of those in the care of the Chorlton Union and 31 per cent of those within Crumpsall workhouse were also Catholic. In 1900 they were also over-represented in Strangeways jail, with one third of all prisoners being adherents.[118] W.W.Rutherford's caustic comment about

---

[117] See Appendix 5, table 1.

[118] See Appendix 5, Table 2.

Irish Catholics, made to Orangemen gathered in Manchester's Athaneum in 1912, was therefore not too far wide of the mark. To his rhetorical question "when they come over here where [do] we find them particularly?" he confidently answered "Why, in our workhouses and in our gaols."[119]

Information about the post-1914 position is largely unavailable. Fortunately, there is one piece of evidence which suggests that the frequency of Catholic poverty had not much diminished by the late 1920s. Of those children in the care of the Manchester Union, which covered all of the city, 35 per cent were Catholic, over twice the proportion of Catholics in the city.[120]

6. Conclusion.

The Irish came to Manchester in the nineteenth century mainly as poor countrymen and women, with few skills that could command respect in the city's labour market. As a consequence they lived in the poorest parts of town, particularly in the north where unskilled labouring was most in demand. Their descendants, like the rest of the working class, had few opportunities to 'get on' and remained in the same areas and jobs occupied by their great-grandparents. Only very slowly did the Catholic population 'rise' to the level of non-Catholics, and only slowly did they become a more dispersed population. Stability rather than change is perhaps the most remarkable feature of this period. The appointment of the second-generation Irishman Dan McCabe as Manchester's first Catholic Lord Mayor in 1913 was greeted with much euphoria by the city's

---

119 *MG*, 27th April 1912.

120 See Appendix 5, Table 3.

leading Catholics. It was optimistically seen as a measure of their progress since the Famine. Many leading Catholics recognized, however, that most of his co-religionists still had a very long way to go before poverty and Catholics became strangers.[121]

---

[121]*Harvest*, December 1913.

Chapter Two. The Catholic Church in Manchester.

1. Introduction.

The Catholic Church was the most important feature of the distinctive Irish Catholic way of life. This chapter outlines the institutional character of the city's Church, a task which involves an analysis of the social composition of its mainly upper class English hierarchy, numerous Irish priests and predominantly Irish and working class laity. It suggests what it meant to be a Catholic and points to those areas of conflict between a 'Catholic' and an 'Irish' identity. The concluding section highlights the role of the parish priest, the man who mediated between Church and people and upon whose shoulders fell the full weight of their respective problems and concerns.

2. Structure.

Manchester was the largest city in the diocese of Salford. In 1900 out a total number of just under 300,000 Catholics it accounted for about one third of the population. The diocese also included Ashton, Blackburn, Burnley, Bolton, Rochdale and other cotton spinning and weaving towns which lay to the city's north-east and south-west. The Salford diocese encompassed virtually all of east Lancashire and north-east Cheshire, with Manchester lying in its south and the Colne valley at its north. The city also served as the diocesan capital: the Bishop of Salford resided there and his cathedral, that of St.John's, was found on Chapel Street in the city of Salford.

The diocese was, therefore, essentially industrial. As already shown Manchester's Catholicism owed much to the post-Famine influx of poor Irish immigrants. Middle class, lower middle class, even skilled working class Catholics were relatively thin on the ground, whereas the city could boast only one 'aristocratic' Catholic family, the de Traffords. Even so, the family's principal interests lay to the city's south-east: Eccles, Trafford Park and Stretford where they owned substantial estates.[1] The de Traffords consequently had only an irregular interest in the fortunes of the Church in Manchester which was largely confined to charitable donations. However, given the general poverty of most Catholics this was a not inconsiderable service for which the Church was most grateful. Lady Annette de Trafford in particular has been described as "one of the most generous benefactors of the Salford Diocese."[2] In her will she left a donation to St.Anthony's in Trafford Park as well as a generous annuity for the parish priest. As a show of gratitude her portrait was hung in the church school.[3] Especially during Herbert Vaughan's tenure family members were close to the Bishop and some of the clergy felt that their importance could not be overstated.[4] Yet, like the Duke of Norfolk, the de Traffords remained distant figures to most of Manchester's Catholics. After the sale of their Trafford Park estate to industrial developers and the deaths of Sir Humphrey

---

[1] Harvest, August 1922.

[2] C.A.Bolton, Salford Diocese and its Catholic Past (Manchester, 1950), p.205.

[3] MS, tape 794.

[4] Harvest, October 1894.

and Lady Annette, the family's orbit shifted south to London's Berkeley Square.[5] After the First World War the part played by the de Trafford's in Manchester was effectively at an end.

In 1890 the Irish, widely defined, comprised the majority of Manchester's Catholic population, although this was a declining proportion. The calculation of the proportion of the Irish within the Catholic population is fraught with difficulties but a general picture does emerge as the table below illustrates.

Table 4. The proportion of Irish-born within Manchester's Catholic population.

Year	Catholics	Irish-born	%
1891	97,845	24,203	25
1931	119,749	15,690	13

It has been assumed that three quarters of all Irish immigrants were Catholic which is, in all probability, a very conservative estimate given the weakness of Orangeism in Manchester. Therefore, in 1891 about 25 per cent of the city's Catholics were Irish-born. This figure was more than halved by 1931 to 13 per cent. These figures are more impressive when supplemented by those second and third generation Irish who at least double the size of the effectively Irish population. Therefore, in 1891 those of Irish birth or immediate descent accounted for at least one half of Catholics and by 1931 they amounted to over one quarter.

This Irish predominance within Catholicism was reflected in the large number of parish priests of either Irish birth or origin. Between 1874 and 1890 38 per cent of priests working within the

---

[5]Walton, Lancashire, p.222.

Salford diocese had been born in Ireland whilst 4 per cent had been born in the diocese with an identifiably Irish surname. The figures for the period 1912-28 show that this predominance actually increased, with 46 per cent of priests being Irish-born and 13 per cent born locally and of apparent Irish origin.[6] Moreover, it seems likely some parishes located in largely Irish districts often had more than their fair share of Irish priests. St.Wilfrid's, for example, was not without a priest born in County Kerry from the early 1890s to at least the middle 1930s.[7]

The upper reaches of the Church were, nevertheless, largely beyond the Irish and remained firmly in English hands. This was in contrast to the position in the United States where the Irish quickly captured control of the Church and remained in a position of dominance over other nationalities throughout the early twentieth century.[8] Between 1890 and 1939 no Bishop of Salford was of Irish birth or origin. Herbert Vaughan (1872-92) was from a recusant family with strong landed connections; John Bilsborrow (1892-1903) similarly came from an old Catholic family based on the Fylde coast; Louis Casartelli (1903-25) in contrast was the son of a middle class Italian immigrant; Thomas Hennessy (1925-38), the last Bishop of the period, although born in St.Patrick's parish and in possession of an 'Irish' surname, claimed to be an Englishman.[9] This bias against the Irish was also evident in the number of priests recruited in the diocese with a recognizably Irish surname. Between 1874 and 1890

---

[6]See Appendix 6, Table 1.

[7]MCH, 17th March 1934.

[8]Levine, Irish Politician, pp.73-4.

[9]Bolton, Salford, pp.131-34; MCH, 21st November 1925.

only 28 per cent of priests born and working in the diocese had such a family name. By the period 1912-28 this situation had slightly improved as 36 per cent had an Irish surname.[10] This was a result less of the Church's deliberate exclusion of candidates with Irish blood and more a consequence of the lowly social status of the Irish themselves. Quite simply, only the comfortable could afford to have a priest for a son. When at Salford Cardinal Vaughan had encouraged the training of more sons of the poor for the priesthood, but the diocese's scant resources meant that his hopes were never fully realised.[11]

The Church was composed of parishes, each of which had its own particular social and national character, personalities and problems. Apart from their religion, it is not clear what each parish held in common. After 1918, whilst St.Anne's in middle class Crumpsall enjoyed the benefit of a parish tennis court, Corpus Christi in Miles Platting was forced to cancel a bazaar as, due to unemployment, there was little to sell.[12] Moreover, rivalries existed between neighbouring parishes with contrasting social characters. Before 1914 a supposedly friendly contest was annually evident during Whit walks between the 'posh' Holy Name and the working class and Irish St.Wilfrid's. Ironically, the Church's own efforts increased class division along parish lines. In 1890 there were 29 parishes in the Manchester district, a number which increased to 42

---

[10]Appendix 6, Table 2.

[11]Arthur McCormack, Cardinal Vaughan (1966), p.143.

[12]Anon, St.Anne's 1917-38. Souvenir Brochure of the Twenty First Anniversary of St.Anne's, Crumpsall (Manchester, 1938); MCH, 19th March 1932.

by 1939. As its building programme advanced and it constructed more and more churches with smaller boundaries so parishes became more compact and socially homogeneous.

3. Catholic identity.

The Catholic Church in England attempted to construct for itself a single identity, quite distinct from that of its largely Irish and working class adherents. For example, the accepted interpretation of the period in the mid-nineteenth century in which the Church was re-established and numbers of Catholics appreciably increased - known as the 'Second Spring'- showed Catholicism in England to be much more than simply the faith of poor Irish immigrants. Bishop Casartelli described it as being a four part transformation in which the Irish influx was most definitely subordinate. As he saw it, the three most important impulses came from the defection of intellectual Anglicans to the Church, a revival of the faith amongst indigenous Catholics and the efforts of the Papacy.[13] The only major contemporary account of the Church in Manchester, whose author was ironically of Irish origin, also relegated the importance of the Irish influx to less than two pages.[14] This was simply to fly in the face of the facts, for, prior to the immigration of the Irish into the city, Manchester possessed only a tiny number of Catholics of English birth and origin.

---

[13]L.C.Casartelli, Sketches in History (1906), pp.238-40.

[14]John O'Dea, The Story of the Old Faith in Manchester (Manchester, 1910), pp.152-3.

These views were a reflection of the national origins of those who comprised the upper reaches of the Catholic laity and clergy and, thereby, held the reins of power within the Church. English members of the Church were greatly concerned to establish their patriotic credentials. The son of a middle class English convert, Canon Richardson of St.Augustine's wrote in the correspondence columns of the Manchester Guardian during 1908 that "I do object to being called Roman. I am as much an Englishman as Mr.Moulton."[15] Eleven years earlier Father Bernard Vaughan of the Holy Name had rejected claims made by the Archbishop of York that Catholicism was a foreign faith.[16] The Catholic hierarchy, embarrassed by its non-English adherents was, perhaps, only completely at ease in an English context. There was a happy emphasis in the diocesan magazine the Harvest upon recusant history which, being prior to the Irish invasion, was completely patriotic. Similarly, it was no accident that the hymn most sung on Catholic public occasions was 'Faith of our Fathers', a song which recalled the suffering of English Catholics. The hierarchy, indeed, thought of itself as a national Church-in-waiting and saw the Established Church as something of a parvenu.[17] At school Catholics were reminded that their Church had preceded the Anglican, a creation of bad King Henry VIII.[18] As Cardinal Manning had once suggested "the constitution of England, with the Crown, Lords and Commons is a Catholic creation and a

---

[15]MG, 7th March 1908.

[16]MG, 18th January 1897.

[17]C.C.Martindale, Father Bernard Vaughan: a Memoir (1923), p.60.

[18]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.85.

Catholic inheritance."[19] Every Sunday most, if not all, churches in Manchester offered prayers for the ruling monarch - Catholicism had once been the national religion and, it was felt, one day in the near-future it would be so again.[20]

However, due to their distinct history, many English Catholics still felt slightly detached from the rest of Protestant society. Anthony Burgess traced his family history back to an English martyr, probably a mythical link, but nevertheless illustrating the way certain families harked back to the old persecution.[21] Simply by being Catholics in a city where the Church was mistrusted by many provoked a sense of isolation. Bishop Bilsborrow expressed this sentiment in 1893:

> ...every day of the year the public press was reproaching her [the Church] for her insolent claims, for her usurpation of liberty and of civil rights, for being an enemy of progress and loving darkness, and for being hostile to Sacred Scriptures. They need not be surprised at those charges, nor must they be sick at heart to find the Church they loved so well reviled. Their Lord said that if they were of the world the world would know its own and would love them. But because they were not of the world but of God, therefore the world hated them.[22]

There was also an identification with Catholics of other countries which qualified, if only weakly, the patriotism of non-Catholics. For example, during the early months of the War, in the midst of reports of German atrocities in Belgium, it was felt that whereas Protestant Prussians were quite capable of such acts, Catholic

---

[19]Quoted in A.E.Dingle and Brian Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning as a Temperance reformer', Historical Journal, vol xii, 1969, p.499.

[20]1900 Lenten visitation returns [hereafter LVR], Wardley Hall [hereafter WH].

[21]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.7.

[22]MG, 17th April 1893.

Bavarians were not.[23] The ultramontane sympathies of the English Catholic hierarchy also qualified its patriotism, at least in the eyes of some, albeit already hostile, observers.[24]

4. Faith and nationality.

The Catholic Church in Manchester was nationally heterogeneous, although to a much lesser extent than the American Church.[25] It did not only serve English and Irish Catholics. In and around Ancoats there were also Italian, Polish and Lithuanian adherents. To each of these nationalities the Church presented a face whose character was transformed as the cultural milieu changed. Before 1914 there were about 1,000 Italians living mainly in the neighbouring parishes of St.Michael's and St.Alban's.[26] During the 1920s priests endorsed Italian Blackshirts and members of that organisation were prominent in arranging parochial events. Italian boys at St.Alban's had their own club and drilled in uniform whilst Fascist propaganda was left in the vestry.[27] The much smaller number Polish and Lithuanian population both lived in St.Casimir's parish where each nationality had their own club. St.Casimir's church, found in an old building at the bottom of Rochdale Road, had also been carefully named so as not to alienate either nationality - Casimir was both patron saint of

---

[23]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.16; Harvest, October 1914.

[24]Derek J.Holmes, More Roman than Rome: English Catholics in the Ninteenth Century (1978); Philip Sidney, Modern Rome in Modern England (1906), pp.311-16.

[25]For the example of the Church in New York see Jay Dolan, The Immigrant Church (Baltimore, 1975).

[26]MG, 6th September 1919.

[27]MS, tape 87; MCH, February 6th, 1926.

Poland and a prince of Lithuania.[28] English Catholics also associated their nationality with their faith. In 1894 a Stretford solicitor painted a banner commemorating the Dedication of England to the Virgin Mary in the previous year. The intertwining of patriotism and Catholicism was lovingly described by the Harvest.

> The central figure is ofcourse Our Lady, surrounded by halo, and outside the decorative work can be seen the fifteen mysteries of the Rosary. On top amongst oak leaves are to be seen on either side a spandril containing a shield. On one are the Loyal Arms of England, and on the other the Papal Arms. Lower down are to be found the Red and White Roses. Under Our Lady's feet four cherubs holding up the English colours. The Union Jack peeps forth all round the banner for about five or six inches.[29]

The Irish predominance was by far the most significant fact for the Church in Manchester. However, the population's 'unpatriotic' demand for Home Rule made Catholicism's tendency to assimilate national culture and concerns much more problematic. Nevertheless, a number of Irish priests were active within the local Nationalist movement before 1916 and were present at nearly all Irish national and political occasions. In 1891 it was suggested that all but one of the priests working in the city's North-east division, which included a large part of north Manchester, were Nationalists.[30] Such priests, as Charles Booth noted in London, "in sentiment are even more Irish than they are Catholics."[31] Some were only too willing to make a more direct contribution to the Nationalist cause. During the

---

[28] MCN, 27th October 1906.

[29] Harvest, May, 1894. My thanks to the Rev. Chris Ford for pointing this out.

[30] MCN, 26th September 1891.

[31] Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London. Third Series: Religious Influences. Summary (1903), p.246.

municipal campaign of 1905, when a meeting in favour of the Irish Liberal candidate for St.Michael's ward was disrupted, Father O'Callaghan warned hecklers that

> He wished he had a dozen of them, one after another, and he would not only show them that he was a priest and a Catholic, but an Irishman...[32]

Some also participated in the post-War Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL) in spite of its links with Sinn Fein.[33] Forty priests walked with the MacSweeney 'funeral' procession to Moston cemetery in 1920. However, having to serve both Irish and English Catholics some priests felt the need to moderate the violent national sentiments evident during this period. Although Father Butler of the Holy Name welcomed nineteen released Sinn Fein prisoners as heroes, he also

> ...pleaded for unity in the Catholic world, for the brotherhood among all men, and for friendship between Englishmen and Irishmen.

It was not a message his Irish audience received at all well.[34] Even so, the city's Nationalists remained devout and recognized the contribution of the priest. A vote of thanks to 'The Clergy' nearly always brought pre-1916 United Irish League meetings to a close. In 1898 T.F.Kelly remarked that

> If there was an Irish nation existing today, after the tyranny of three centuries, it was due, more than to anybody else, to the sterling patriotism of the Irish clergy in the past.[35]

---

[32] MCN, 28th October 1905.

[33] MCH, 31st May 1919.

[34] MCN, 26th February 1922.

[35] MG, 18th March 1898.

Even during its Republican phase Nationalism remained tied to Catholicism. ISDL branches went on trips to the shrine at Holywell and members were taught how to answer the Rosary in Gaelic.[36]

If, amid Manchester's slums, the parish church and priest often appeared as Irish as the shamrock, this was not the case for the Church as a whole. The hierarchy, both nationally and locally, was mainly composed of Conservative, upper class Englishmen completely hostile to Home Rule and anxious to establish the English Catholic Church's patriotic credentials. This did not mean, however, that they were unwilling to use Irish nationality for the benefit of the faith. Cardinal Vaughan was well-known for his opposition to Home Rule and struggled to prevent his Church being identified with Nationalism.[37] Nevertheless, whilst Bishop of Salford, he still spoke at a gathering of Manchester Irishmen celebrating St.Patrick's Day. At one such event he declared that

> I am not an Irishman in blood, but in heart I am an Irishman. My heart has gone out to you, and yours have to me. We are closely united in affection. My cause, the cause of our Holy religion, is your cause, and your cause is mine.[38]

Vaughan's 'Irishness' had everything to do with Catholicism and nothing with nationalism. This approach, however, was also adopted by some Irish priests, such as Father Donovan of Salford who declared that the "cause of Ireland is essentially a Catholic cause" and consequently those Nationalists who did not remain practicing members of the Church were a danger to both nation and religion.[39]

---

[36]MCH, 7th May, 11th June 1921.

[37]J.G.Snead-Cox, The Life of Cardinal Vaughan, vol.i (1910), p.473.

[38]McCormack, Cardinal Vaughan, pp.215-16.

[39]Federationist, July, September 1910.

The Church employed Irish nationality in order to impress upon Catholics the importance of their faith: it was often asserted that to be fully Irish they had to be practising Catholics. Even those Nationalist heroes, the Manchester Martyrs, were praised for their devotion to the Church.[40] Both English and Irish priests promoted the notion that Ireland was essentially a devout nation. For the former it was a convenient way of establishing a mutual identity, whereas for the latter it was a useful weapon with which to attack non-attenders amongst their compatriots. To a packed St.Patrick's church in 1932 Father Edwin made the familiar claim that only by being devout could the Irish lay legitimate claim to their nationality.

> He reminded the congregation of the traditional fervour of the Faith of the Irish and their steadfastness to moral principles, but they must not live in the past or on the past. Their Faith and their moral principles were being assailed as never before. They must live their Faith and courageously proclaim it to the world. Only in that way would they be the true sons and daughters of St.Patrick.[41]

Ireland was presented as a religious paragon, which Bishop Casartelli despairingly compared to a corrupted England.[42] In a similar vein Father Keegan of St.Augustine's complained that there were far fewer crucifixes in England than in Ireland.[43] Bishop Henshaw even used Irish nationality as a crude means of eliciting

---

[40] MCH, 30th November 1900.

[41] MCH, 19th March 1932.

[42] MCH, 2nd April 1921.

[43] MCH, 27th August 1921.

money for one Church project by suggesting that

> If I were an Irishman - I have not that happy privilege - I would feel very much ashamed if I did not contribute something to the [building of the] new St.Patrick's.[44]

Irish events were honoured by the Church in Manchester. The Feast of St.Patrick was celebrated by special Masses and parochial entertainments. The blessing of the shamrock on St.Patrick's Eve was widespread.[45] In the early 1880s the saint was also celebrated at mass meetings associated with the Church's temperance campaign. These occasions were was sometimes used to propagandise for Catholic schools and underline the message that, in Canon Kershaw's words, "Nationality was a very good thing but religion was a better."[46] Although by the end of the decade the Free Trade Hall meeting had been taken over by Nationalists concerned to emphasise the importance of Home Rule, the Feast continued to be used by the Church to communicate its own particular message. At such times English Catholics were inclined to give Irish nationality a political meaning in stark contrast to that accepted by Home Rulers. On St.Patrick's Day 1901 Father Bernard Vaughan, the Cardinal's brother, declared that

> of all Catholic countries throughout Christendom, Ireland was the most Catholic [...] Her daughters were to-day as pure as they were fair, while her sons were as Catholic as they were intelligent, generous and brave. Their bravery they were even now displaying on many a field in South Africa.[47]

---

[44] MCH, 27th July 1935.

[45] Harvest, March 1922.

[46] MG, 18th March 1882.

[47] MG, 18th March 1901.

Despite all efforts the English Catholic Church failed to bridge the gulf that remained, in politics at least, between many Irish and English Catholics. Members of both the pre- and post-War Nationalist movement would have agreed with John Redmond's 1910 comment that English Catholics were more of a menace to the Nationalist cause than Belfast's Orangemen.[48] The ISDL even went so far as to prevent English Catholics joining the movement.[49] Nevertheless, in the parish and particularly in the person of the priest, the identification of Irish nationality with the Catholic faith remained very strong.

5. The Church in one person: the parish priest.

At the turn of the century Charles Booth noted that the power of the Catholic Church was based upon the "exceptional powers vested in the priesthood."[50] Some, like Father Tim of St.Augustine's, must have presented a striking picture in Manchester's mean streets, wearing "bell-bottomed trousers and a big trilby, all in black and [carrying] a walking stick which was more like a shillelagh."[51] As he strode through the streets the priest quite often provoked deeply felt reactions, both Protestant abuse and Catholic affection. He was a catalyst, drawing responses from people hardly ever found within a church. His very presence in both the street and in Catholic homes confirmed, both to adherents and non-Catholics, the distinctive character of Catholic life.

---

[48] MG, 10th January 1910.

[49] MCH, 4th December 1920.

[50] Booth, Life and Labour, pp.241-2.

[51] Burke, Lad, p.9.

Protestants found the priest's influence one of the most fascinating and disturbing aspects of Catholicism. In part this was because, as Booth also observed, they had no comparable figure. The Anglican cleric did not possess the same theological sanction and it was extremely rare for him to win the same sort of social influence. In the 1860s William Murphy's sensationalist lecture tours exploited these Protestant suspicions and lingered quite deliberately upon the sexual favours priests were popularly thought to demand of Catholic women.[52] According to Robert Roberts these feelings of mistrust continued into at least the early part of the twentieth century.[53] Ernie Benson, who lived in Hunslet, Leeds recalled an incident from before 1914 which suggests that suspicions about the priest's supposed sexual activities remained. If Benson's boyhood gang

> happened to meet an RC priest in the street and the RC kids said "Good morning Father" the others would mimic them in the hearing of the priest or start ragging them by saying "If he's your father he must be kept busy" or "does your dad at home know he's your father?" [...] Quite often this would lead to fighting.[54]

Whether a priest did or did not possess considerable influence within his parish largely depended upon his own character and inclination. As Boulard has indicated for France, he could even affect - positively or negatively - levels of attendance.[55] Nevertheless, his power had its limits, not the least of which was

---

[52]Walter Arnstein, 'The Murphy riots: a Victorian dilemma', Victorian Studies, vol.xix, no.1.; Geoffrey Best, 'Popular Protestantism in Victorian Britain' in R.Robson (ed.), Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain (1967).

[53]Roberts, Slum, p.170.

[54]Ernie Benson, To Struggle is to Live (Leeds, 1979), vol. i, p.58.

[55]F.Boulard, translated by M.J.Jackson, An Introduction to Religious Sociology (1960), pp.85-6.

his own physical frailty, for the exertions of his calling, especially in working class districts, were often too much for one man.[56] As Hugh McLeod has emphasised, priests were individuals. Whereas some were outgoing, others were reclusive and whilst some gently persuaded others were more apt to bully and bluster.[57] A number were none of these. Some were also more strict than others: when Father Clancy of the Holy Name denied absolution to Anthony Burgess after confessing his sins Burgess simply confessed again to the more lenient Father Fitzjames.[58] Whatever an individual priest's particular characteristics the clergy as a whole had an unparalleled access to a Catholic's everyday life. They were no strangers to the home, street or even pub and had, therefore, a broad platform upon which to base their activities. The numerous Irish priests enjoyed an added advantage in working with their mainly Irish parishioners. A shared nationality gave them an extra intimacy - although the Irish were also said to have been among the toughest and most fearsome of clerics.[59]

In working class districts even Catholic priests found it difficult to exert their authority with effect. This was particularly so when they attempted to improve attendance at church or tried to and modify popular manners and morals. This was even the case during the 1830s when they were widely seen as having magical

---

[56]On the morbidity of Catholic priests see Jennifer S.Supple, 'The Catholic clergy of Yorkshire, 1850-1900: a profile', Northern History, vol.xxi, 1985, pp.221-3.

[57]Hugh McLeod, Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth Century Britain (1984), p.74, 430-1.

[58]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.119.

[59]MS, tape 273.

powers at their disposal.[60] Moreover, by no means were all devout parishioners willing to do the priest's bidding without question. One cleric complained that it was not unusual for a priest advocating temperance to be unable to stop his own parochial Men's Club from selling beer.[61] Prior to 1914 St.Patrick's endured two serious conflicts between priest and laymen. In 1904 Canon Musselly, during a "great scandal" of obscure origins, demanded that his parochial Old Boys' Association disband. In pursuance of this end, he stopped members attending church. Bishop Casartelli was forced to ask T.Q.Ruddin, a prominent Nationalist, to act as mediator.[62] A later St.Patrick's dispute involved a power struggle between one priest and the male Confraternity of the Christian Doctrine which ran the Boys' Sunday school. He did not want the school administered by this group - presumably he wanted it for himself. Members wrote to Casartelli that their priest had "accused the Confraternity as a body, of showing disrespect and disregard of his authority." Prior to this complaint the priest had already secured the resignation of Dan McCabe, the Liberal councillor and Nationalist leader, from his post as Confraternity President. The Bishop was, once again, asked to intervene.[63]

---

[60]For the case of Rev.Daniel Hearne of St.Patrick's in this period, G.P.Connolly, 'Little brother be at peace: the priest as Holy Man in the nineteenth century ghetto', in W.J.Sheils (ed.), The Church and Healing. Studies in Church History (1982), vol.xix, .pp.193-7.

[61]Unnamed priest to Casartelli, Ep. 1/9, WH.

[62]Letter from Ruddin to Casartelli, 20th January 1904, St.Patrick's Box, WH.

[63]Letter from members of the Confraternity of the Christian Doctrine to Casartelli, undated possibly c.1910, St.Patrick's Box, WH.

Before 1914 members of the Catholic Federation, in the main respectable skilled men, attempted to introduce more 'democracy' into parochial life. The priest's monopoly of power within the parish was criticised as it was said to inhibit the participation of working men. It was said that a more open parish, free from the existing "autocratic arrangement" could only increase their interest.[64] The Federation failed to change matters as it was in reality reliant upon the priest's patronage. Without his permission a branch could not be established within the parish.[65] It was no accident, therefore, that in the parish of one the Federation's severest critics, Canon Lynch of St.Wilfrid's, the Federation quickly faded away to nothing.[66] As will be shown later, politics was also an important area of conflict between priest and laity.

The priest did not wait in church for his people to come to Mass. He went out to meet them and drum up support. As Cardinal Vaughan realised when Bishop of Salford, "A house-going priest makes a church-going people."[67] Father Timothy, an Irish priest at St.Alban's visited pubs on Saturday nights to ask patrons about their attendance at Confession. He also knocked on doors on Sunday morning to cajole people into attending Mass.[68] An Irish labourer recalled one priest from St.Augustine's calling at his lodging house one evening in 1919 to ask if any of the inhabitants wanted to

---

[64] Federationist, June 1910; MCH, 10th May 1907.

[65] Peter Doyle, 'The Catholic Federation 1906-29', in W.J.Sheils and Diana Wood (eds.), Voluntary Religion. Studies in Church History, vol. xxiii (1986), pp.465-7.

[66] MG, 12th January 1910; Appendix 14, Table 1.

[67] Quoted in McCormack, Cardinal Vaughan, p.175.

[68] MS, tape 87.

attend the Rosary. Their response was not encouraging, as they were all preparing to go out to the pub. They were, however, respectful in their answers as "nobody gave a back answer to a priest."[69]

One of the most important duties a priest had to perform was his weekly visits to Catholic homes to ask after adherents' health, welfare and attendance at church.[70] It was an opportunity to discover their problems and, at the same time, see whether they were becoming a 'problem' for the Church. A priest in a poor York parish in the late 1940s estimated that every parishoner, even "backsliders", were visited by himself or one of his four assistants once every four weeks.[71] As he walked through the streets the incumbent of St.Anne's, Crumpsall acknowledged, and knew by name, even a young Irish girl working as a domestic servant and only an irregular attender at church.[72] Father Thompson, who worked in the slum parish of St.William's, described one such round of visits in 1893.

> "Good Morning, Father." "Good morning, child." "Hallo! Good morning Mrs.Smith." "Good morning, Father," and so on all day round the Meadow [...] There is evidently a pleasure in seeing the priest as he passes by with a cheery word and a friendly nod, while the mere glance of the eye will at once detect whether the occupants of the house belong to the household of the Faith, or to that vast army of "don't-go-anywhere" class of people so often met with.

This is probably an overly rosy picture. Having entered a home Thompson suggested he merely "gently" reminded Catholics about the importance of Mass. He describes his visits as being quite an event,

---

[69] MS, tape 122(1).

[70] MS, tape 271.

[71] B.Seebohm Rowntree and G.R.Lavers, English Life and Leisure: a Social Study (1951), pp.349-50.

[72] MS, tape 273. The York priest believed that it was the duty of all priests to know all Catholics personally, Rowntree and Lavers Life and Leisure, p.351.

for neighbours would "flock" into the house at which he called.[73] Not all priests were the centre of such obvious affection, for Thompson was a popular man, known as the 'Worker Priest' and under his lead the Church was active in the Meadow's wider life. In contrast, parishioners of St.Augustine's during the 1920s were said to have kept up their attendance at church simply through fear of Father Keegan.[74]

The priest, therefore, was no stranger to the homes of most Catholics. Moreover, especially if Irish he had little regard for the privacy of the Englishman's castle. Father Hughes of St.Anthony's, Trafford Park, habitually walked into houses without announcing himself. This earned him a rebuke on at least one occasion.[75] Father Tim of St.Augustine's also had the habit of entering without knocking.[76] The Catholic home was part of what the priest considered to be his legitimate sphere of influence, for within lay the family and children - his most precious treasures. To ensure that these little jewels were at least christened Catholics and educated in a Catholic school priests felt no compunction in intervening in a mixed marriage. Husband and wife sometimes had made their own informal compromise as to the Church in which they were married and in which faith their children were raised. The priest would set about these agreements with a will.[77] One Anglican

---

[73] Harvest, March 1893.

[74] MS, tape 271. Mick Burke recalled that his Irish mother was also terrified of her local priest, Burke, Lad, p.9.

[75] MS, tape 821.

[76] Burke, Lad, p.9.

[77] For an example of such a compact and how a priest subverted it, see Margaret McCarthy, Generation in Revolt (1953), pp.25-32.

respondent has recalled such a priestly intervention in the marriage of one of her mother's best friends in the years prior to 1914. This woman was born a Catholic but had lapsed and married an Anglican who regularly attended St.Clement's, Ordsall so her first two children were christened Anglicans. Her third birth, however, was complicated and required the attention of the local midwife, a Catholic. Soon after this delivery a priest from St.Joseph's, Ordsall appeared on the scene, possibly after an interview with the midwife. He did not save the poor woman anything.

> ... the Father went that often and told her that her two children she'd already got were bastards and she was living in sin [...] In the end she came to my mother and said could she sleep at our house, because she wasn't sleeping with Harry any more - that was her husband - until he turned and married her in church.

The husband eventually yielded to this pressure, they were re-married in St.Joseph's, the two older children re-christened Catholics and all subsequent offspring attended St.Joseph's school.[78] This approach did not always work, however, as the child of another mixed marriage recalled. Her father was the lapsed Catholic in this case and he more easily resisted the priest's pressure. After ordering the priest out of his Collyhurst shop, informing him that the children were his wife's concern, they were no longer "pestered". In this case the domestic division of labour went against the Church.[79]

Even when all members of a family were formally Catholic, if one member's irreligion appeared to threaten the faith of any other's, intervention was called for. After one respondent had

---

[78] MS, tape 484.

[79] MS, tape 165(1).

argued with his priest, after which he was considered a Communist, he and a number of his colleagues from St.Patrick's visited the man's house much more regularly. They were afraid that the respondent would try to stop his sister attending Mass, something he had no intention of doing. The priests had blackened his name to the extent that old school friends who continued to attend church started to ignore him.[80]

The priest also felt a responsibility to improve not only the religious, but also the civil, conduct of his flock. Irish priests were particularly known for their use of the fist to impose order and punish miscreants.[81] It was not uncommon for a priest to intervene in disputes, be they in the home or street. Father Thompson of St.Anthony's was especially reknowned for this.

> ...he was a fat, very jovial man, you know. Any trouble, especially on a Saturday night, any trouble boozing - "Send for Father Thompson." And Father Thompson'd soon have it settled.
>
> How would he settle it?
>
> Just tell them off. Oh, they'd take notice of him, even the Protestants. Oh he was a by-word for that kind of thing in Trafford Park. He'd settle any business, any trouble.[82]

Anglicans were also aware of the priests ability to solve disputes. One recalled that, especially after closing time, "Father Hughes was better than a policeman."[83] This was not, however, the exclusive function of Catholic priests as at least two Anglicans, Reverend Catterall of Miles Platting in the 1900s and Canon Peter Green of Greengate in the 1920s, were famed for their ability to disperse

---

[80] MS, tape 457.

[81] MS, tape 487(1).

[82] MS, tape 821.

[83] MS, tape 780.

street brawls.[84] Anglicans, when it suited them, also exploited the priest's authority for their own ends. When a non-Catholic shopkeeper found that one of her Catholic customers would not pay her bill she went straight to the local priest. After the shopkeeper had made her case he declared that "The first thing they're taught to do in this church is pay their way." By the following morning, and presumably after a visit from the Father, the erring Catholic had paid her bill.[85]

The priest not only made Catholics pay their way, but looked after the faithful's own material needs. He represented the interests of parishioners to officialdom.[86] He was also a source of charity, something for which Canon Byrne of St.Michael's was particularly well-known. His obituary in the Manchester Catholic Herald noted that

> Self-sacrifice scarcely describes his charity; he robbed himself even of necessaries, and wore his clothes till they were something more than shabby, so that he might be able to assist the poor. He was always reluctant to refuse any one seeking alms, and this naturally led him to be the victim of much imposition. Beggars met him and knew that their appeals would not go unheeded if he could possibly assist them, and the demands on his purse were far unequal to his means.[87]

This echoes Booth's description of certain parish priests in London who, though by no means affluent, "if they have a shilling in their pocket no one in want will ask in vain."[88] However, Byrne's

---

[84]Fred Roberts, Memories of a Victorian Childhood and Working Life in Miles Platting, Manchester (Swinton, 1983), p.9; H.E.Sheen, Canon Peter Green (1965), p.34.

[85]MS, tape 516. For the way some priests also attempted to discourage money lending, O'Mara, Slummy, pp.66-7.

[86]MS, tape 271.

[87]MCH, 19th October 1907.

[88]Booth, Life and Labour, p.243.

indiscriminate charity clearly did not meet with the Catholic Herald's approval. Nevertheless, all priests were seen as providers: even the upper class Englishman Bernard Vaughan in comfortable Holy Name was visited in his presbytery by "many of the woe-begone class who freely obtain access to him in order to make application for advice and relief."[89]

A priest's funeral often revealed the extent to which he had been able to win the people's affection. When Canon Toole of St.Wilfrid's died in 1892 at the age of eighty five, nearly half a century after being first appointed to the parish, even some Protestants paid their respects to a man who had become a celebrated local figure. On the day of his burial

> the whole district of Hulme was astir, the solemn event among all classes of the neighbouring population being one upon which, to all appearances, no one would miss being present to see the last of, and there must have been many thousands outside the church and along the route, besides some hundreds gathered at the cemetery. The shops in the neighbourhood were closed, and universal sympathy and loyalty to the memory of the late and respected canon was evidenced on all sides, and from a mass of people of mixed creeds.[90]

When Canon Liptrot of St.Anne's died a year later, after twenty eight years in the parish, 6,000 people filed past his coffin, the equivalent of all his parishioners.[91] If in life the priest failed to much improve the people's observance of their duties then he did so in death. Canon Byrne had been in Ancoats for over twenty five years. The Sunday before his burial an "extraordinary number" of Catholics attended Mass and Communion. On the day of his funeral

---

[89] MFP, vol.ii, 1890, p.26.

[90] MCH, 18th March 1892.

[91] Anon, The Story of Saint Anne's, Ancoats, (Manchester, 1948).

many people lined the streets to watch the procession and the Manchester Catholic Herald sold 3,000 copies of his portrait in less than three days.[92]

The priest, therefore, was the single most important individual in the Catholic parish, an omnipresent influence upon popular Catholic culture, both religious and secular. He came into contact with those on the margins of the faith and, on occasion, could pull them back from the the brink of irreligion. Certainly, he rarely gave up on even the most hopeless cases without a fight. One St.Alban's priest continued to visit a family in the hope of bringing them back into the practice of regular devotions in spite of their failure to attend to their Easter duties for seven years.[93]

6. Conclusion.

The Church in Manchester had no one identity: its upper reaches were exclusively English, whereas many parish priests and all the lower orders were Irish or of Irish origin. Adherents were divided by class, status, geography and nationality. Nevertheless, the Church could still serve as a point of reference to all those born into the faith. On occasion, such as during Whit or when Catholic schools appeared to be under threat, all their differences could be obscured - albeit temporarily.

---

[92] MCH, 26th October 1907.

[93] Letter to Bilsborrow, 19th April 1893, St.Michael's box, WH.

Chapter Three. Faith in the City.

1. Introduction.

From the middle of the nineteenth century the Catholic Church, both in Ireland and England, attempted to improve the level of formal devotion amongst baptized Catholics. In Ireland, as Emmet Larkin has shown, from the 1850s the Church tried to 're-make' Catholics by emphasising the central importance of attendance at Mass and of other sacred duties. He has suggested that this project was so successful that a distinction must be made between pre-Famine and post-Famine emigrants. In his eyes, the former were for the most part hardly ever at church and almost wholly ignorant of dogma whereas the latter were mainly sober citizens much more concerned with expressing their faith in the Church-approved manner.[1]

At the same time in the towns and cities of England the Church, shocked at the weakness of the faith amongst immigrant Irish, also attempted to reforge popular attitudes and practices. For, according to Larkin only about one third of these Catholics regularly attended Mass whilst in Ireland, a level of devotion which very possibly declined amongst the slums and poverty in places such as Manchester's Irish Town and Little Ireland.[2] The Church responded with an intensive campaign of missionary activity and enthusiastic revivalism designed to re-introduce the faith to a fitfully

---

[1]Emmet Larkin, 'The devotional revolution in Ireland, 1850-75', American Historical Review, vol.lxxvii, 1972.

[2]P.Hughes, 'The English Catholics in 1850' in G.Beck (ed.), The English Catholics, 1850-1950 (1950), p.80; Gerard Connolly, 'Irish and Catholic: myth or reality? Another sort of Irish and the renewal of the clerical profession amongst Catholics in England, 1791-1918' in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City, p.231, 336-7; Larkin, 'devotional revolution', p.636.

'Catholic' population.[3] The hierarchy set about imposing its narrow and rigorous interpretation of Catholic devotion and tried to destroy the vaguer, ill-disciplined and confused Catholicism of the peasant.[4] Like the campaign in Ireland, this assault on popular attitudes, which lasted for most of the 1850s and 1860s, is credited with improving levels of devotion amongst immigrant Catholics. Gerard Connolly's rough calculation suggests that by the 1880s and for at least the period up to the First World War as many as 60 per cent of Catholics in England regularly attended Mass.[5]

This was not a once and for all transformation. Many Catholics still needed the constant presence of their priest to encourage their continued formal devotion. The Church still had to remind adherents of the crucial importance of the formal observance of the faith. During the 1920s every issue of the Holy Name's parish magazine carried the reminder that

> On Sundays and Holydays of Obligation it is a mortal sin to miss Mass [...] and culpable unpunctuality is an offence against the Commandment of the Church.[6]

In spite of such warnings both hierarchy and parish priest considered the level of popular attendance to be dangerously inadequate. The working class in general and adult males in particular were seen to be the worst offenders. This chapter will

---

[3]Sheridan Gilley, 'Catholic faith of the Irish slums. London, 1840-70', in H.Y.Dyos and Michael Wolff (eds.), The Victorian City: Images and Realities (1973).

[4]Lees, Exiles, pp.164-97.

[5]Connolly, 'Irish and Catholic', p.231.

[6]Holy Name Messenger, January 1929. The severity of this message might have been influenced by the presence of Jesuits at the church.

attempt to assess the extent of formal observance amongst Manchester's Catholics, a particularly vexed question on which it is difficult to be at all precise.

2. The practice of the faith.

Any attempt to generalise about Irish Catholic religious practice is fraught with difficulties, if only because there were manifold levels of religious behaviour.[7] This is compounded by the unfortunate fact that there are no figures for attendance at Sunday Mass in Manchester for the period 1890-1939. Quite remarkably, the last general religious census was that of 1851.[8] Fortunately, however, in 1900 a census was conducted by the Catholic Church for the entire Salford diocese to ascertain, amongst other things, the number of Catholics attending mid-week Mass as well as Easter Communion for both 1899 and 1900.[9]

Details for Easter are of great significance because it was probably the most important point in the Church's calender. Attendance at church during this holiday was particularly crucial, absence being seen by the Church as a very serious offence indeed. During interwar Easters priests from St.Patrick's made a special point of visiting families to ensure members had undertaken their duties.[10] Consequently, many Catholics who only irregularly - or

---

[7]Gilley, 'Irish diaspora', p.197.

[8]For censuses in other parts of the country during these years see Hugh MacLeod, 'Class, community and region: the religious geography of nineteenth century England', Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain, no.6, 1973.

[9]1900 LVR, WH. See Appendix 7.

[10]MS, tape 457.

never - attended Sunday Mass found themselves in church at this time of year.[11] John Tomlinson's father, a printer, was not alone in considering that attendance at Easter on its own kept him a Catholic.[12] Even so, it is obvious that, in any one year, a large number of Catholics still did not go to church at this time.

Thirty one of Manchester's Catholic churches, covering an estimated population of 89,063, produced returns for the 1900 census. Of these 38,694 attended Easter Communion, an average attendance across all parishes of 43 per cent. Manchester appears to have been unremarkable in this regard, for the same census produced a figure of 32 per cent for Bury and 49 per cent at Bolton. Between these parishes lay wide differences, from St.Edmund's, Miles Platting where only 24 per cent of Catholics attended church to St.Alban's, Ancoats where the figure was 82 per cent. At the extremes, six churches reported an attendance of over 60 per cent whereas only five admitted to one of less than 30 per cent. It would be more than foolish to attempt to account for this variation by referring to a single, all-encompassing cause. However, three out of the four churches reporting figures in excess of 70 per cent were found in strongly middle class districts. Therefore, it is probably prudent to assume that class played at least some part in influencing attendance. Nevertheless, between parishes of an equally strong working class composition there was still a large degree of difference - if class was a factor then it was tempered by others unknown. Similarly, Irish nationality was quite weak in positively

---

[11]Boulard, Introduction, pp.107-8.

[12]Turner, Collyhurst, p.24; MS, tape 60. Anthony Burgess's father, on the other hand, only went to church for Midnight Christmas Mass, Burgess, Little Wilson, p.51.

influencing attendance levels - St.Patrick's, the Irish parish, had the eigth lowest figure of 36 per cent. However, perhaps the most compelling feature revealed by the census is not variety but uniformity. Fifteen parishes, virtually half of the sample, returned attendance figures which indicated that between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of their parochial population went to church during Easter. Or, as the priest would have seen it, in many Manchester parishes between two thirds and one half of Catholics did not attend church.

At this point it would be useful to compare figures for the attendance of Anglicans at church during this time of year. Although Easter does not seem to have held the same sort of significance for the Church of England attendance was still remarkably low. The limited evidence to hand is, fortunately, for parishes in working class districts, so the comparison with Catholics is quite valid. In St.Andrew's in Ancoats only 266 went to Easter Communion in 1902. This was less than 5 per cent of a total parochial population of 8,209.[13] In June 1914 a Manchester City News journalist found that less than 200 of the 700 seats in St.Michael's in Hulme were full during on Sunday service.[14] In 1932 one Catholic amateur statistician made a census of church-going in seven unnamed Lancashire towns. By counting adherents at all Sunday morning services, he calculated that Catholics attended at a rate five to six times greater than any other religious body. The Manchester Catholic Herald smugly noted these figures.[15] All this would seem to undermine Henry Pelling's

---

[13]St.Andrew's , Ancoats, statistical returns on parochial work, 1894-1903, M45/1/6/1-3, MAD.

[14]MCN, 6th June 1914.

[15]MCH, 19th March 1932.

suggestion that the presence of large numbers of Irish Catholics caused a high church attendance amongst Anglicans. If, after contact with Catholics, they became more aware of their different religion most Anglicans do not appear to have expressed this by going to church.[16]

A more detailed picture of Easter attendance amongst Catholics is available for St.Wilfrid's, Hulme a parish of a strongly working class and Irish character. This is derived from the parish log book which recorded attendance to Easter duties for the years 1914-37.[17] They are summarised in the table below.

Table 5. Attendance to Easter duties, St.Wilfrid's, Hulme, 1914-37.[18]

Period	Av. attendance	% parish pop
1914-19	3162	47
1920-25	4044	60
1926-31	3690	54
1932-37	3548	52
1914-37	3611	53

Figures for this later period suggest a strong similarity with the impression gained from the 1900 Census. In 1899 St.Wilfrid's could claim the attendance of 48 per cent of its parish, whereas the average figure for the 1914-37 period was 53 per cent. This average, however, conceals a wide variation in attendance from year to year, from 44 per cent in 1937 to 69 per cent in 1925 - a difference of 25 per cent. In terms of individuals the turn-over was probably even

---

[16]Pelling, 'Popular attitudes', pp.35-6.

[17]St.Wilfrid's parish log book, available St.Wilfrid's church.

[18]Taken from Appendix 8.

greater - it should not be assumed that the same 44 per cent of the parish always went to Communion at Easter. Similarly, it is unwise to suppose that no more than 69 per cent of the parish ever attended St.Wilfrid's at this time of year. Instead, it is highly probable that many more Catholics, at one Easter or another, performed their formal duties, thereby expressing their affiliation to the Church. With this in mind, it would seem reasonable to suggest that during the interwar period at least three quarters of Catholics living in St.Wilfrid's parish went to church at Easter, if only once.

Missions were one of the most powerful causes of variation in Easter attendance - in St.Wilfrid's they could draw into church an extra 10 to 15 per cent of parishioners.[19] All parishes periodically held a Mission. St.Mary's, Mulberry Street annually, whereas St.Wilfrid's usually once every five years. A Mission, preceded by advance publicity meant to "penetrate the poorest alley", turned the parish church into an active and vibrant centre for the renewal of the faith amongst Catholics.[20] For a handful of weeks the church held mid-day conferences and evening sermons, whilst confession was heard morning, noon and night.[21] This was the Catholic Church's version of revivalism. However, Missions were not meant to convert non-Catholics, their primary function being to

> ...foster the piety of those already well grounded in the knowledge and practice of their faith, [and] bring back to a sense of duty and responsibility others whose fervour leaves a great deal to be desired.[22]

---

[19]See Appendix 8 for details.

[20]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.i, pp.396-9.

[21]Harvest, March 1913.

[22]Corpus Christi Magazine, February 1936.

Crowds were usually attracted - during Corpus Christi's 1936 Mission the church was nearly always packed for the evening sermon.[23] In St.John's parish in 1901 membership for confraternities, guilds and other parochial bodies all increased in a Mission's immediate wake.[24] Unfortunately for the Church Missions had only a temporary impact. As the St.Wilfrid's figures show, the Easter after a Mission attendance at Communion fell back to its normal level. The effect was probably a consequence of their comparative rarity: the only time St.Wilfrid's held two Missions in consecutive years, in 1934 and 1935, the second failed miserably. Whereas the 1934 Mission caused 67 per cent of Catholics to attend Communion that of 1935 drew in a mere 50 per cent. Evidently, guilty, non-attending Catholics could only be induced to visit church once every few years.

Once Catholics found themselves at church their reactions can be fairly described as mixed. By no means all consumed the priest's intended message. Some were oblivious to almost everything. Although perhaps an exceptional source, the young Anthony Burgess found Mass "boring and incomprehensible" whilst he could only describe St.Edward's, Rusholme as "a detestable little church, in which people always seemed to be farting."[25] In 1924 Father Cookson of St.Joseph's, Longsight felt forced to remind his congregation of their obligation to listen attentively to his sermon, commenting that "the undivided attention of congregations today was seldom

---

[23]Corpus Christi Magazine, April 1936. See also comments about the large numbers at St.Mary's, Harvest, April 1909.

[24]Harvest, November 1901.

[25]Burgess, Little Wilson, p.25, 138.

guaranteed."[26] To some this might have appeared churlish - surely it was enough that the Church expected them to turn up without also forcing them to listen?

3. The devout.

It is clear that a large number of Catholics infrequently attended to their formal devotions whereas a much smaller body regularly attended to their spiritual needs. The size and composition of this devout minority can be gauged from the numbers of Catholics who went to mid-week evening Mass and from membership of confraternities and sodalities.

In Manchester, those attending Mass on any day apart from Sunday comprised a very small number, the average attendance at mid-week Mass in 1900 was only 4 per cent of the total Catholic population. The position was only slightly better in other towns within the diocese: in Bury only 5 per cent and in Bolton only 6 per cent went to mid-week Mass. This was particularly the case in parishes where the lower working class of Irish origin predominated. In only twelve out of the twenty eight parishes which returned estimates for the 1900 census did 5 per cent or more Catholics attend mid-week Mass on any one evening. It seems clear that class played a major part in influencing the level of attendance, as was suggested for attendance at Easter. Only three of the twelve top parishes - St.Alban's (12 per cent), St.Peter's (6 per cent) and St.Michael's (11 per cent) - could be described as having a dominant

---

[26] MCH, 1st March 1924.

working class contingent.[27] Parishes in areas with a strong middle class character predominated in the upper group. It was no accident, therefore, that the church which returned the highest level of attendance - 18 per cent - was St.Anne's in middle class Stretford. At the other end of the scale St.William's, in the slums of Angel Meadow, recorded the lowest rate, that of 0.4 per cent. As with Easter Communion working class parishes well-known for having a large number of Irish members did not have an impressive rate of attendance - St.Patrick's recorded a level of only 3 per cent.[28]

Those devout Catholics who attended Mass on a week-day evening would probably have been members of parochial confraternities and sodalities. These organisations, divided along lines of sex and age, were designed primarily to improve attendance at formal church rituals. In 1936 the vocation of the Children of Mary, a confraternity for women and girls in their later teens, was seen as

> one of sheer battling against unworthy worldliness and of striving for higher ideals than those that worldliness has to offer.[29]

Members undertook to collectively attend Mass, Communion and Confession at least once a month. Some, in fact, also attended mid-week evening Mass together once a week, as did 400 members of St.Anne's Men's Confraternity in Ancoats during the 1890s and a similar number of men from St.Patrick's in 1910.[30] They also attended Sunday afternoon meetings, at which issues of interest to Catholics

---

[27]It is interesting to note that two of these parishes, St.Alban's and St.Michael's, both served Manchester's Italian population. We can only speculate about their effect on attendance levels.

[28]See Appendix 7, Table 2.

[29]Corpus Christi Magazine, May 1936.

[30]St.Anne's Souvenir; MCH, 28th May 1910.

were discussed. In the autumn of 1929 the Holy Name's Children of Mary listened to talks on Pius X, Church dogma and the Mexican persecutions.[31]

It appears that, in those parishes where it is possible to reconstruct membership figures, between just under 10 per cent and somewhat over 20 per cent of parishioners were involved in confraternities. In 1910 this varied from parish to parish, with 8 per cent in St.Anne's, Ancoats, 12 per cent in St.Wilfrid's, 21 per cent in St.Patrick's and 26 per cent in both the Holy Name and St.Augustine's, All Saints. Over time the level of membership for these parishes varied, with all but one experiencing a peak in 1910 followed by decline during the interwar years, when they lost between one half and one third of members. This was probably due to the exodus of the predominantly middle class and skilled working class members of such groups to the suburbs rather than an actual decline in the numbers of the devout. It is more difficult to be precise about the exact composition of the confraternities. However, pre-1914 figures for St.Wilfrid's indicate that adults and, perhaps more surprisingly, males as a whole were over-represented, for on average 59 per cent of confraternity members were male and 73 per cent were over fourteen.[32]

Confraternities were not solely religious organisations. Under their auspices were held social evenings and summer trips. During the 1890s membership of the Holy Name's Young Mens' Confraternity

---

[31]Holy Name Messenger, September 1929.

[32]See Appendix 9.

was even seen as a means of establishing business contacts.[33] Similarly, the parish served as a social centre for the devout. John Tomlinson attended house parties with other adolescent members of the Children of Mary (female) and the Christian Doctrine (male). Participants were charged 6d., which was donated to St.Patrick's, for the pleasure of an evening of piano recitals in a colleague's parents' front parlour.[34] For a small cadre, parochial activities must have taken up most of their non-working lives. This can be seen from the reconstruction of the duties undertaken by thirteen men from St.Wilfrid's in the years 1910-11. One of these activists, R.Martin, was chairman of the Guild of St.Sebastian, St.Vincent de Paul, the 1911 Board of Guardians' election committee and the Bazaar committee of the same year as well as being active in the Old Boys' Association.[35]

It seems clear from impressionistic accounts that the Catholic devout, that is the group of people who regularly attended church and used the parish for their social activities, derived from distinct social origins. They were principally members of the skilled working class, lower middle class and middle class. This meant that many of either Irish-birth or recent origin were under-represented, something which is suggested by the low proportion of priests born in the Salford diocese with obviously Irish surnames - the sons of the devout were a good source for

---

[33] MFP, vol.ii, 1890, p.26.

[34] Turner, Collyhurst, p.24.

[35] For the activities of some of his fellow parishoners see Appendix 10.

priests.[36] Therefore, it is probable that the Catholic devout were socially little different from their counterparts in other denominations.[37] Perhaps there was a greater skilled working class component amongst Catholics than amongst other religious bodies. As will be shown later trade unionists were the original core of the Catholic Federation in 1906.

A small number of better off Catholics were able to express their devotion by spending money on the Church, whereas the rest of the devout largely provided only their manpower. William Healey's father, a building contractor, donated a processional cross and tabernacle to St.Bede's College chapel. In return he was made a Knight of St.Gregory on the recommendation of Cardinal Vaughan. His son continued this good work by making to St.John's a gift of a monstrance and stations of the cross. When Healey died in 1909 he was a member of the Order of St.Gregory, being buried in the Order's habit. Riches, it seems, found more than their own reward.[38]

It was possible that amongst the devout were also a number of the unskilled workers. On the basis of evening Mass and confraternity figures, the devout probably accounted for between 5 per cent and 15 per cent of a working class parish's Catholic population. Given the lowly social character of Catholics in the

---

[36]The son of the Headmaster of St.Wilfrid's school became a priest, MC, 12th February 1892. Thomas Delaney of the Holy Name had three sons, two of whom became priests the third a Catholic Hedamaster, whilst his two daughters became teachers at the Holy Name school, MCH, 20th April 1935. See Appendix 6, Table 2.

[37]See Hugh McLeod, 'White collar values and the role of religion' and R.Q.Gray, 'Religion, culture and social class in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Edinburgh' both in Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), The Lower Middle Class in Britain, 1870-1914 (1977).

[38]Harvest, August 1909.

city it is improbable that all of these people were skilled and lower middle class, although it is certain that most of them were. However, the Church certainly called upon the better-off confraternity members to help the poor retain their faith. In the Holy Name parish during the late 1920s, as the middle classes moved out and the working class in, confraternities were looked upon as

> best suited to provide the framework for the social and charitable activities which are often needed on behalf of the poorer - and still, more, the younger - sections of this "floating" Catholic population.[39]

Irreligion amongst the poor was the 'problem' the Church wanted the devout to help solve.[40]

4. Impediments to attendance.

The Church was not blind to the effects of social position on Mass attendance. When at Salford Cardinal Vaughan noticed that even short-run down turns in economic fortune caused a decline.[41] He was confident that once Catholics had socially improved they would regularly participate in the Church's rituals and it was in this spirit that he advocated 'thrift' and temperance.[42] However, despite all efforts as many as one quarter of those born Catholics did not attend church, even irregularly. In 1900 the priest at St.Patrick's

---

[39]Holy Name Messenger, April 1929. See also the issue for November 1929.

[40]The Catholic Boys Brigade looked to "men of social standing" to become officers, Harvest, June 1909. For their role in youth clubs, Harvest, November 1911.

[41]McCormack, Vaughan, p.175.

[42]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.i, pp.432-33.

dismissed this proportion of his parishioners as being "nominal only".[43] A survey conducted in the Westminster diocese during the early 1890s was even more pessimistic.[44]

Why did poverty prevent regular attendance at church? One reason often given by the poor themselves was that they did not possess Sunday best clothes.[45] Clothes were a general indicator of social place which the habit of dressing up for church, evident in all denominations, made much more acute. This was the case in St.Anne's, Ancoats where, before 1914 "social distinction was regulated by the clothes one wore."[46] Therefore, a child normally happy enough in his "weekday rags" came to see them as a "badge of shame" when worn at Mass.[47] In spite of this, some priests were inclined to see this as simply an excuse for non-attendance.[48] Others, like the parish priest for St.Peter and Pauls' in Bolton, were more sympathetic. In 1900 he noted that during periods of high unemployment many Catholics "are unable to appear as they think fit [so] they often miss Mass for a while."[49] Many poor Catholics, nevertheless, did attend church, but only after they had done their

---

[43]1900 LVR.

[44]Pelling, 'Popular attitudes to religion', pp.32-3.

[45]MS, tape 487(1).

[46]Bart Kennedy, Slavery: Pictures from the Abyss (1905), p.210.

[47]O'Mara, Slummy, pp.63-4.

[48]McLeod, Religion, p.76.

[49]1900 LVR.

best to obscure their modest circumstances. Women used a shawl to hide cheap clothing and men who did not own a Sunday best suit still wore a collar and tie.[50]

Money not only influenced whether poor Catholics attended Mass: cash also decided where they sat inside church. The Irish wife of a labourer recalled that during the 1920s the Holy Name church still had reserved seats near the front with their own cushions and kneeling mats which forced her to sit at the back.[51] In 1908 a priest complained that pew rents were still general throughout the diocese. He, for one, found the imposition of class distinction incongruous with religion.

> Look at the matter from a democratic point of view. Why should there be any class distinctions? I believe in poor and rich mixing together and sitting wherever they wish. Pew rents cause a deal of unpleasantness amongst the parishioners.

Nevertheless, he admitted that it would prove almost impossible to eliminate them. Just as the priest had to suffer the drinking habits of the working class so the better-off were conceded their vices and pleasures.[52] Moreover, even without pew rents the poor, unable to contribute to the collection, still shamefully sat at the back of the church.[53]

The lack of even a modest amount of disposable income also prevented the poor participating in the parochial leisure activities so favoured by the devout.[54] They were also denied the opportunity to

---

[50] MS, Crawley transcript; 'Sisters' tape, in author's possession.

[51] MS, tape 266.

[52] MCH, 23rd August 1908.

[53] MS, tape 60.

[54] Kennedy, Slavery, p.206, 210-15.

play much of a role in Catholic ritual. The parish May Queen, for example, was chosen by priest and teachers because she was the "right type of girl", which meant that her parents could afford to pay for her costume and flowers.[55] This effectively restricted the choice to daughters of the devout and better-off. Consequently, in 1925 the church organist's daughter was St.Michael's May Queen and in St.Patrick's Councillor Cassidy's daughter was selected.[56]

Just as there are no figures for Mass attendance in Manchester so there are no figures broken down along lines of sex and age. Therefore, the work of Seebohm Rowntree in York and, to a lesser extent, that of Caradog Jones in Liverpool has been consulted.[57] Rowntree's York censuses of 1901, 1935 and 1948 reveal significant details about the city's not inconsiderable Catholic population, many of whom were of Irish origin.[58] They clearly uncover the disparity between male and female attendance levels. In 1935, whereas 48 per cent of Catholics attending Mass under seventeen years old were male, of those between seventeen and nineteen the proportion had fallen to 38 per cent and further slipped to 36 per cent for the age group composed of those fifty and older. Expressed another way, 34 per cent of males attending Mass were under

---

[55] MS, tapes 481(1), 509.

[56] MCH, 9th May 1925.

[57] B.Seebohm Rowntree, Poverty. A Study of Town Life (1901), Poverty and Progress. A Second Social Survey of York (1941) and, with G.R.Lavers, Life and Leisure. A Social Study (1951); D.Caradog Jones (ed.), The Social Survey of Merseyside, vol.iii (Liverpool, 1934).

[58] F.Finnegan, Poverty and Prejudice: a Study of Irish Immigrants in York, 1840-1875 (Cork, 1982).

seventeen whilst only 25 per cent of females were in this group.[59] In aggregate terms male under-representation was consistent throughout the period: of those attending Mass in 1901 only 41 per cent were male, in 1935 38 per cent and in 1948 44 per cent.[60]

The influence of gender, as with poverty, was by no means specific to Catholics. The under-representation of men in church was a phenomena which knew no denominational bounds. In comparison with the Anglicans, however, this was less pronounced.[61] In York, relatively more Catholic men attended church than Anglican men, 6 per cent more in 1901, 2 per cent more in 1935 and 4 per cent more in 1948.[62] In Liverpool during the early 1930s this was even more impressive, the difference being 8 per cent.[63]

Nevertheless, despite poverty and the influence of sexual difference, many Catholics who only infrequently expressed their faith in the formal manner understood by the Church retained their affiliation to Catholicism.[64] As Rowntree and Lavers reported in the late 1940s of an Irish roadsweeper,

> Mr.S. is a Roman Catholic and he says that it is the only true religion, but enquiry elicits that he himself has not been to church for more than twenty years.[65]

---

[59]Rowntree, Poverty, p.422.

[60]Rowntree, Poverty, pp.417-19; Rowntree and Lavers, Life, p.344.

[61]The predominance of women at Mass was also a common feature in France, Boulard, Introduction, pp.134-5.

[62]Rowntree, Poverty, pp.417-19; Rowntree and Lavers, Life, p.344.

[63]Jones, Survey, pp.330-1.

[64]Mr.O, tape in author's possession; McLeod, Religion, p.77.

[65]Rowntree and Lavers, Life, case 84, p.47.

5. Informal religion.

It was impossible to escape from religion in working class Manchester. From the omnipresent Salvation Army band in Angel Meadow to Walter Greenwood's grandmother's coverlet decorated by Biblical quotations, religion was an accepted aspect of life.[66] It was in this form, immediate and everyday, that those who only irregularly attended church experienced religion.

The people simply reinterpreted certain religious rituals and instruments despite the techings of the churches. Just as some Anglican mothers thought that christening a baby increased its chances of survival, Catholics felt that drinking from the chalice cured whooping cough and looked upon the altar as a place to swear oaths.[67] Such beliefs were transmitted, in the first instance, through the family, particularly along the female line. The Catholic Mary Bertenshaw has described how all the women in her extended family had their ears pierced at an early age in order to keep evil and disease from the eyes.[68]

The home, even of those who rarely attended church, was often a store of religious artefacts which marked out the family as Catholic. The display of portraits were especially popular. The diocesan magazine the Harvest was originally described as "an album of distinguished persons" in which pictures were to be detached and framed. It noted in 1892 that when an issue contained the portrait

---

[66]Bertenshaw Sunrise, p.23; Walter Greenwood There Was a Time (1967), p.65. For a more general overview, Hugh MacLeod, 'New perspectives on Victorians working class religion: the oral evidence', Oral History, vol.xiv, no.1, 1986.

[67]MS, tape 556; O'Mara, Slummy, p.117; Barclay, Memoirs, p.9.

[68]Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.5.

of a local priest circulation in his parish dramatically increased.[69] Mary Bertenshaw has recalled that in many Catholic homes in Angel Meadow pictures hung in the parlour were often of the Pope, the Sacred Heart or the Virgin.[70] Joe Toole has suggested that in many of Ordsall's Catholic homes a portrait of Christ was found hanging opposite one of the boxer John L.Sullivan.[71] During the 1930s Anthony Burgess's stepmother kept pictures of the Pope and other 'holy hagiographs' in her bedroom. Even as late as the 1950s one Collyhurst home contained a statue of Mary.[72] By their nature such items gained a symbolic importance. Walter Greenwood recalled an old Irish Catholic couple who, to postpone their eventual incarceration inside the workhouse pawned all their furniture and pictures. All that remained inside their bare house was a crucifix hanging on the parlour wall.[73] Altars were sometimes constructed in some homes.[74] Mick Burke recalled of his Irish mother that

> Although she never made me go to church, she had an altar in the front room and would go on her knees in front of the crucifix. Father would say, "You're a bloody old fool, Maggie. There's nobody listening to you," and she'd reply, "And you're a bloody heathen!"[75]

---

[69]Harvest, October 1892.

[70]Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.25.

[71]Joe Toole, Fighting Through Life (1935), p.12.

[72]Burgess, Little Wilson, pp.48-9; Turner, Collyhurst, p.82.

[73]Greenwood Time, p.19.

[74]Tom Barclay, Memoirs and Medleys (1934), p.27.

[75]Burke, Lad, p.5.

Similarly, the Church encountered non-attenders at various important points in their lives, including birth, the beginning of adolescence, marriage and death. First Communion was generally considered to be "perhaps the most important event in the life of the child." It was marked by a parade of schoolchildren, all about to take Communion, from their school to parish church.[76]

The half-world of magical intervention, spirits and saints, lived on in the popular imagination, in no small part encouraged by the Church's own efforts. The shrine at Holywell in north Wales, supposedly the scene of a miraculous medieval cure, was extremely popular with Catholics.[77] It continued to produce a modest crop of 'cured' cripples into the interwar years and large numbers of Catholics from Manchester made hopeful day-trips to the site during summer holidays.[78] Lourdes also continued to fascinate. The Church organised annual pilgrimages of the sick to the shrine, which were well-reported. A local girl's recovery from paralysis was front page news in a 1934 edition of the Manchester Catholic Herald.[79] As late as the 1940s the battle between heaven and Hell raged in the minds of Catholic children brought up on nuns' tales of the devil stoking his fires with bad Catholics. After a St.Patrick's girl was sent to the back of the class, during a violent bout of hiccups, she began

---

[76]O'Mara, Slummy, p.90; Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.6; Barclay, Memoirs, p.36.

[77]Judith F.Champ, 'Bishop Milner, Holywell and the cure tradition' in Sheils, Church and Healing, p.162.

[78]MG, 7th September 1896; MCH, 28th June 1924.

[79]MCH, 18th August 1934. For another 'miracle', MCH, 31st May 1924.

to cry. The back of the class was where all non-attenders were forced to sit and she was "convinced that God would forget that I had been to Mass and if I died that night I would go to Hell."[80]

Bernard Vaughan at the Holy Name deliberately played upon the people's love of show and beauty in order to encourage attendance at devotions.[81] His brother the Cardinal also recognised the importance of making Mass more attractive. For him the letter of the dogma was not enough, he sought to foster services "in which all is cusp and bright, rather than uncertain and tediously slow." Vaughan also advocated the introduction of more congregational singing simply because it was more popular.[82] Whilst the Anglican church was placed under surveillance by the Protestant League for any sign of "Romish practices" Catholics were free to indulge in devotions and ritual that fired the religious imagination.[83] Bart Kennedy's description of Mass at St.Anne's, Ancoats makes this clear.

> The altar was ablaze and glowing with lights and the shrine of gold. The priest chanted forth sonorous words. Old, old words that had come down through the ages. "Kyrie eleison! Kyrie eleison! Christie eleison!" The boys on the altar in their white robes gave out their responses. And in the air were solemn organ-tones.
>
> And when the stoled priest held aloft the chalice to expose the Sacred Heart! How breathless was the hush that came over all as the sound of the bell told of the presence of the Body of Christ![84]

---

[80]Turner, Collyhurst, pp.74-5.

[81]Martindale, Vaughan, pp.45-6.

[82]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, pp.400-01.

[83]Harvest, February 1903.

[84]Kennedy, Slavery, p.56.

Sometimes, as with St.Francis' May parade prior to the First World War, Catholic ritual was so splendid that it attracted the interest of a number of inquisitive Protestants.[85]

6. Conclusion.

The division between those who attended Mass regularly and those who did not was extremely variable. Although on average about 40 per cent of Catholics attended Easter Communion every year, this figure often varied enormously from year to year. By no means all Catholics annually attended church at Easter, let alone every Sunday. However it can be stated with some confidence that a large majority felt that they ought to and, on occasions like a Mission, duty overcame indolence. Although the poor, particularly men, were less likely to attend church than the better-off and women they all retained a sense of being Catholics. Many men still attended church on occasion, as did many of the poor. Within this large body of occasional attenders lay a cadre of the devout who regularly went to Sunday Mass, mid-week Mass and were members of confraternities. They amounted to about 10 per cent of Catholics in each parish, though in working class districts they were smaller in number.

As a large number of Catholics who went to church at Easter did not do so every Sunday it would seem that considerably less than 40 per cent perhaps no more than one-third, were regular attenders. This would bring the level of devotion down to a figure historians are more apt to ascribe to the pre-Famine Irish rather than those Catholics who had undergone a 'devotional revolution' in Ireland and England. This latter concept seems due for considerable

---

[85] *Harvest*, June 1897.

qualification especially when account is taken of the performance of the 'Irish' parish of St.Patrick's in relation to attendance at both Easter and mid-week Mass. Nevertheless, what little evidence there is to hand - principally derived from St.Wilfrid's - suggests that this level was not in decline prior to 1939.

As a whole Manchester's Catholic population retained a considerable contact with their Church, even if a majority rarely - or never - attended its formal devotions. The Church remained an accepted organic feature of popular culture. Therefore, taken as a whole the Catholic population held an intermediate position between rigid adherence to formal devotion and complete disbelief. Boulard has described such a situation.[86] As the next chapter will suggest, the social aspect of parish life ensured that an overwhelming number of Catholics were touched by the Church's authority, even if this was only during their school years. This is not to say that most Catholics saw the Church as simply a social institution, for underlying its position was a power assumed to be greater than mere man. Nevertheless, to ignore the social role of the Church would be to obscure its more decisive impact upon the everyday lives of even nominal Catholics.[87] Formal devotion, upon which the Church set so much importance, was of less significance than it at first supposed: attendance at Mass was popularly considered to be only one expression of a Catholic identity.

---

[86]Boulard, Introduction, pp.4-5, 8-9.

[87]Gerard Connolly's work in particular takes the form of a 'spiritual' response to the 'social' interpretation of the Catholic Church.

Chapter Four. A Separate Life.

1. Introduction.

The previous chapter concluded the Catholic Church was very much a social, as well as a religious, institution. As Hugh McLeod has noted the Church "tried to dominate the whole non-working life of its members."[1] By providing education, welfare, health advice and leisure activities for Catholics the Church tried to act as a state within a state in the hope that it would create a Catholic society within a non-Catholic society. In some measure the Church was merely following a pattern set by other denominations, anxious to create an environment infused with their particular religious message. However, whereas these groups aimed to make converts the Catholic Church merely sought to retain a hold upon born adherents. This was, then, an essentially defensive response to a proselytising 'threat' posed by other denominations. It was a stance adopted by the Church in other European countries in which Catholics were a minority.[2] As in the United States, and elsewhere in the Irish diaspora, the Church built a series of "structural fences" around the Catholic population to protect them from a whole range of putatively malign influences.[3] In Manchester these were, according to individual preference, drink, gambling, immorality, irreligion, socialism, other denominations and simple neglect of the faith.

---

[1]McLeod, Religion, pp.77-8.

[2]Hugh McLeod, 'Building the "Catholic ghetto": Catholic organisations 1870-1914' in W.J.Sheils and Diana Wood, Voluntary Religion. Studies in Church History, vol.xxiii (1986), pp.431-3.

[3]Thernstrom, Poverty, p.179; Gilley, 'Irish diaspora', pp.195-6.

This chapter outlines the ways in which the Church tried to use such social 'space' as it could create and assesses whether it was successful in its ambitions. Although the Church's prime objective was defensive, reacting to the actions of others, it also sought to modify certain aspects of Catholic working class culture. This project was intertwined with the desire to improve the level of popular devotions as 'respectability' - thrift, moderation in drink and gambling, respect for authority - was seen as inextricably linked to religiousity. This chapter questions whether working class Catholics, particularly male adolescents and adults - thought by the Church to be in greatest 'danger'- were ever isolated from non-Catholics and morally or socially 'improved'.

The parish school was the centre-piece of the social network carefully constructed by the Church in Manchester. It was the one key institution no parish felt it could do without. Ancillary to the school were Lads' and Mens' clubs, Mothers' and Babies' Welcomes as well as various forms of charitable efforts, all of which were meant to keep individuals under a broadly Catholic canopy. If many parishes did not possess all of these latter organisations it was due to poverty rather than lack of interest. The chapter begins, however, with a social body not created by the Church, but one seen as crucial to the continuance of the faith, and which it tried to colonise: the Catholic family.

2. The family.

The family was generally seen by many Catholic priests and lay activists as not only the most important prop to the stability of society, but also to the Church's own continued strength. As Jane Lewis has shown, this was a view prevalent amongst most voluntary organisations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[4] Most of what passed for social analysis in the English Catholic Church, however, owed much to English Catholicism's distinctive history and its interpretation of that past.[5] The Church nostalgically looked back to before the Reformation for an ideal social model. The Middle Ages was characterised as a period when a weak state was confronted by a powerful Church possessing a considerable amount of influence over a civil society composed of independent self-regulating bodies. Pre-eminent amongst these latter bodies was the institution of the family. Here English history merged with Roman directive. Leo XIII's 1891 Rerum Novarum declared that the family possessed rights prior to the state because it had historically preceded the state. This view, via an ultramontane English Church, was converted into a warm hostility for any form of state interference in family life. Monsignour Parkinson's A Primer of Social Science, first published in 1913 and widely used thereafter by the Catholic Social Guild until the late 1940s,

---

[4]Jane Lewis, 'The working class wife and mother and state intervention, 1870-1918' in Lewis (ed.), Labour and Love. Women's Experience of Home and Family, 1850-1940 (1986), pp.99-100.

[5]The following account is largely based on Peter Coman, Catholics and the Welfare State (1977).

forcefully made this point.

> The family is the primary product of nature, and is self-contained. Into the family the state has no right of entry except to maintain rights not otherwise defensible. The children, until they grow up, belong to the parents, as being a part and a continuation of themselves.[6]

However, before it could be protected from this external threat the Catholic family had to be given a sound basis. With this in mind mixed marriages were discouraged and the power of the husband underlined. Catholics heartily approved of the institution of marriage itself.It was seen as both a civic and religious duty because of the way it kept young men morally in check and acted as an impulse to 'improvement'. In 1904 the Harvest declared that any

> young man who is possessed with every bodily and mental equipment, and marries not, fails in one of the most palpable duties in life.

Marriage helped safeguard the man's moral conduct by diverting his attention from those "alluring vices that have no place in his eye or mind when his attentions are centred upon a devoted wife." It even improved him, by rendering him

> more virtuous, more wise, and it is an incentive to put forth his best exertions to attain position in commercial and social circles.[7]

The Church, naturally, only encouraged marriages between Catholic partners. Mixed marriages were seen as

> a disaster, a fearful misfortune - in the vast majority of cases full of dreadful misery in this world and the world to come.[8]

---

[6]Quoted in Coman, Welfare State, p.23.

[7]Harvest, August, 1904.

[8]Harvest, January 1899.

Marriages within the faith were regarded by the Church as more important than the happiness of particular couples, for mixed marriage was seen as one of the biggest sources of leakage from Catholicism. In the 1900 census priests variously described such unions as "most pernicious", "unwholesome" and "a curse". The small amount of statistical evidence listed in the census suggests that they were at the very least not usually productive of good Catholic families. Of eighty nine mixed marriages in one part of St.Sebastian's parish, Pendleton the priest described one as "good", seven as "fair" and eighty one as "bad". In Corpus Christi parish the priest saw them in a slightly better light, classifying 50 per cent as "good", 30 per cent "fairly good", 10 per cent in "great danger" and another 10 per cent "practically lost". Such variety was probably the product of different priests' divergent definitions of what made a 'good' Catholic family. Perhaps, therefore, the situation was not so bleak as it was painted. The priest at St.Sebastian's thought that those Catholic parents who neglected their children's faith within a mixed marriage would have done so even if they had married another Catholic. Although it was a minority view the two priests from St.Chad's, Ancoats and English Martyrs' in Urmston went so far as to suggest that mixed marriages in which the Catholic was devout would, in fact, prove to be beneficial to the Church. Instead of losing a Catholic the Church would be gaining an Anglican and all their offspring.[9]

Once established, the family was encouraged to assume a patriarchal character. As Bishop Vaughan, auxiliary to Casartelli, explained "If order and peace are to prevail, there must, of course

---

[9]1900 LVR, WH.

be a head, a ruler, a director. And that head, no doubt, is man."[10] Canon Richardson of St.Augustine's was especially keen for the husband become the centre of home life. Richardson's ideal was the man who ate all his meals with his family and spent his leisure hours within the home. Marriage, according to Richardson, was a partnership, but one based upon distinct qualities inherent to the sexes. Within the family

> the father's power should rule, and the mother's sweetness direct; the children's obedience to their parent's commands should be perfect in simplicity, and the mutual love for one another should be stronger than death.[11]

The Jesuit Father Henry Day, who delivered a number of lectures and sermons on the subject of feminism in 1912, felt that women's complementary but inferior qualities meant that they were not qualified to vote.[12] The Church attached great importance to the 'proper' execution of sex-roles which placed women in a subordinate position to men. As early as 1893 a St.Alban's priest bemoaned the supposedly prevalent "spirit of female domination", which he blamed on the zeal of young women teachers. He attributed one family's irreligion to a wife's usurpation of domestic authority. It was time, he thought, to "bring women into lawful subjection to men".[13] Father Day echoed such sentiments, declaring that the existing domestic order had been determined by both nature and God.[14] Men, however, also had their duties to perform. When Father Timothy of

---

[10] CF, January 1919.

[11] Harvest, May 1897.

[12] MG, 21st October 1912.

[13] Letter to Bilsborrow, 19th April 1893, St.Michael's Box, WH.

[14] MG, 25th November 1912.

St.Alban's visited Ancoats pubs on Saturday nights he implored their male patrons to spend their money not on drink but on their families.[15] Nevertheless, the main weight of the Church's strictures fell upon women. 'Mother' was the centre of family life: it was her function to maintain the family unit and keep the children within the Faith. In 1909 the Harvest produced in doggerel form a list of a mother's responsibilities in the sentimental poem 'Mother's Saturday Night'.

> Placing the little hats all in a row,
> Ready for Holy Mass tomorrow, you know,
>
> Looking o'er garments so faded and thin -
> Who but a mother knows where to begin?
>
> Calling the little ones all round her chair,
> Hearing them lisp forth their soft evening prayer,
>
> Praying as only a mother can pray,
> "God guide and keep them from going astray!"
> Angels' are telling with angel's delight,
> That is what mothers are doing tonight![16]

As Melanie Tebbutt has shown, the Virgin Mary was widely employed as an ideal for Catholic women to aspire to, being meek, mild and submissive. The relationship between Mary and Catholic women was annually made visible in each parish when the May Queen, a young girl dressed in virgin white, crowned the Madonna's statue.[17] Saint Winefred of Holywell, who supposedly died rather than lose her virginity out of wedlock, was another very popular example for Catholic women to aspire to.[18] Tebbutt's conclusion, that Catholic

---

[15] MS, tape 87.

[16] Harvest, February 1909.

[17] For examples of these ceremonies, see MCH, 11th May 1900, 11th May 1929.

[18] Champ, 'Bishop Milner', pp.153-4

women were consequently the most down-trodden members of their sex, is perhaps overstating the case. There were a great number of secular female role-models used to reinforce men's power over women, irrespective of their faith.[19] Other denominations and voluntary organisations also supported the notion that men held a position of authority and it was their exclusive duty to work and the woman's to remain at home.[20] However, it is doubtful that these bodies had the same degree of influence over their members as did the Catholic Church.

It appears that working class women suffered the most for upholding the Church's notion of what a wife's duties should be. For example, according to Pat O'Mara it was his mother's "very Catholic conscience" which made her stay with a drunken and violent husband. Her priority was to remain within the "rigid laws of the Catholic Church in the matter of marriage" and raise her children to be "good Catholics".[21] Ofcourse, this is not to say that non-Catholic working class wives did not also feel pressurised into staying with brutal partners. In contrast, more prosperous female Catholics often enjoyed a very active life outside home provided by the Church's parochial institutions.[22] In the late 1880s the wealthy Catholic Rose Hyland became the first female member of the Manchester Board of Guardians when she stood as one of the Church's candidates. Moreover, before 1914 a number of senior female Catholic teachers

---

[19]Tebbutt, Stereotypes, Chapter Four.

[20]Lewis, 'Wife and mother', pp.101-3.

[21]O'Mara, Slummy, p.33, 36, 44.

[22]McLeod, '"Catholic ghetto"', pp.434-5.

were known to support the extension of the franchise to women.[23] One Catholic suffragist made her opposition to the opinions of Father Day quite plain.[24] In 1911 a handful of Catholic women actually formed a Catholic Womens' Suffrage Society, although this does not seem to have prospered outside London and Liverpool. With only three branches and a membership mainly of middle class English Catholics the Society could not be described as ever being popular. Not surprisingly, perhaps, members were explicitly anti-militant, opposed reforming the divorce laws and remained extremely hostile to birth control. Even so, as late as the 1920s their careful moderation never met with the Church's approval.[25]

When, after the First World War, it appeared that some younger women were no longer prepared to accept their allotted role, the Church was one of the first bodies to warn against the consequences. Bishop Vaughan felt that women were, a familiar point, contravening God's plan.[26] In his Christmas Day sermon Bishop Casartelli made a connection between high wages for girls working in industry with what he saw as a decline in their moral conduct. According to

---

[23]Including Nora Sullivan, Headmistress of St.Edmund's Infants and Miriam Park, Headmistress of St.Aloysius' Mixed, Harvest, August and November 1910.

[24]MG, 28th October 1912.

[25]Francis M.Mason, 'The newer Eve: the Catholic Womens' Suffrage Society in England, 1911-23', Catholic Historical Review, vol.lxxii, 1986.

[26]CF, January 1919.

Casartelli, by separating married men and women the War had

> brought about an abnormal state of mind, especially to our young people of both sexes. It broke down a great deal of maiden's reserve, both in speech and conduct. The years unsettled their minds.[27]

In 1921 a general Mission was conducted throughout the city's parishes in order to restore pre-War order to Catholics who had temporarily got "out of hand".[28] Even the state seemed to be conspiring against the dominance of men within the home. Cardinal Bourne opposed the 1922 Care of Infants Bill because he thought it placed mothers as joint heads of the family.[29] As Ireland was seen as a religious paragon so Irish women were idealised in order to shame the city's Catholics. As the interwar period progressed the innocence of Irish country girls was increasingly contrasted with Manchester's cigarette-smoking, bobbed-haired, bare-backed immoral sophisticates.[30]

As already mentioned, the state was seen as the greatest single menace to Catholic family life. Drink, socialism, disreputable leisure, bad housing, non-Catholic philanthropy, ragged schools and the rest all had their place within the Church's demonology. The contemporary, and apparently ineluctable, growth of the state into more and more areas of civil society was, however, seen as the most menacing of developments. The hierarchy was afraid that the state would eventually interpose itself between Church and people thereby

---

[27]Transcript, Christmas Day sermon, 1919, WH; CF, January 1920.

[28]The words are Monsignour O'Kelly's of St.John's, Salford, MCH, 12th February 1921.

[29]Peter Doyle, 'The Catholic Federation, 1906-1929' in Sheils and Wood, Voluntary Religion, p.476.

[30]MCH, 29th March 1924.

cutting Catholicism's social bonds. These fears were particularly acute in the period before 1914 when the Liberal government attempted to increase public control of denominational schools which received grant-aid from local and national authorities. When Bishop of Salford, Cardinal Vaughan saw state education as "a violation of the law of nature, a destruction of the rights and responsibilities of parents", for they alone had been given charge of the child's "immortal soul".[31] In the face of Liberal proposals Bishop Casartelli told Catholics in 1906 that "all along the line an onslaught is being made to absorb family rights, to instill a state despotism in your homes."[32] Canon Richardson saw the exercise of parental rights in education as having a direct influence upon their own personal character. In his cataclysmic view, once the state had abolished these duties a general collapse of parental responsibilites would swiftly follow. This, in turn, would lead to the formation of a generation of immoral children with no respect for their parents, a process which would intensify when they eventually became parents. Family, Church and society would all eventually collapse.[33] He succinctly made this point when suggesting that

> Without the guiding hand of religion [in education] the proletariat of England will not take long in emulating the Apaches of Paris, and where brutal, there is no such brute as the Englishman.[34]

---

[31] MG, 2nd November 1891.

[32] Lenten Pastoral, (1906), pp.9-10, WH.

[33] Harvest, June 1894.

[34] MG, 5th March 1908.

The Harvest echoed Richardson's sentiments by suggesting that only a Catholic education could prevent drunkeness.[35]

In this sense the Catholic Church was 'liberal', seeing the state as an unnecessary and probably malevolent influence upon an individual's life.[36] This was, however, a liberalism which did not extend to the actions of the Church itself. The state was upbraided for entering Catholic homes because in so doing it impinged on the Church's own territory. After the 1918 Catholics established the Mothers' Defence League to oppose what they saw as the state's attempt to control the family through an "invasion of the homes of working class mothers by a legion of health officials and welfare workers."[37] This was, however, a mainly middle class movement, probably composed mainly of parochial workers who saw in the state a deadly rival.[38] Their own visiting of working class homes, like that of the priest, was thought above criticism.[39]

3. The parish school.

For Catholics the school was the most treasured of parochial institutions. The 1900 census clearly revealed that much of the substantial financial burden incurred by a parish was the consequence of running a school. As in the United States the school was the heart of parish life, the keystone of the Church's alternate

---

[35]Harvest, December 1896.

[36]During the education controversy Canon Richardson called for the government's return to "true liberalism", MG, 10th March 1908.

[37]CF, October 1919.

[38]Lewis, 'wife and mother', pp.113-14.

[39]Jane Lewis, Women in England 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change (Brighton, 1984), p.36.

social system. A parish was thought incomplete without one.[40] Although Catholic parents might only irregularly attend Mass, they were usually careful to send their children, as they had been before them, to be educated in a Catholic school.[41] The Church did not gladly suffer Catholics sending their children elsewhere. Cardinal Vaughan was adamant that "Catholic children will go to Catholic schools - or nowhere."[42] It was consequently extremely difficult for adherents to gain dispensation from the Church to send children to non-Catholic schools. Apart from physical and 'moral' reasons permission was denied and to make matters more awkward the Bishop himself had to judge each case.[43] The effect of a Catholic education upon a Catholic child was considered elemental: Bishop Casartelli attributed a boy's apparent suicide to his lack of such a schooling.[44] This was not just a Catholic phenomenon. In Lancashire the Anglican Church also felt that denominational schools had an important role. E.A.Knox, Bishop of Manchester for the first quarter of the twentieth century, wrote that within the county "Church and school were twin sisters [...] and of the two sisters, school was

---

[40]Clark, Philadelphia, pp.98-9; Thernstrom, Poverty, p.179; Levine, Irish Politician, pp.80-2.

[41]For just two examples of this, Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.34; MS, tape 60.

[42]Quoted in Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.i, p.110.

[43]Acta Salfordiensia, 1905-6, p.67, WH.

[44]Casartelli's diary, entry for 16th June 1906, WH.

often the more favoured."[45] Prior to 1914 the education of Manchester's working class children was largely in the hands of these two churches.

At its minimum a Catholic education prevented non-attendance at Mass during childhood. During the 1930s attendance at Mass by Catholic schoolchildren was "virtually universal" in Liverpool.[46] Whereas the school played a crucial role in the making of a Catholic child the Catholic adult played an important part in the making of the school. Poor Catholics themselves largely paid for the building and maintenance of parish schools. In a sense they could claim a degree of proprietorship: they were their own schools, symbols of their own collective significance. As an unfortunate consequence of relying upon voluntary contributions, many schools were in a dilapidated state. In 1904 one of H.M.Inspectors visited St.Michael's school and found it wanting in many respects.

> The school is becoming overcrowded. The premises have a dingy, untidy appearance, and one half of the room is badly lighted. The offices adjoin the main room and smell badly in warm weather. There is no playground so neither physical exercises nor recreation can be properly taken. Instruction is vigorous, but not effective, because the answering is not under proper control...[47]

Before the 1902 Education Act, which substantially increased aid from local authorities, Cardinal Vaughan reluctantly accepted the accusation that many Catholic schools were amongst the worst in England. As Bishop of Salford he had opposed improvements because

---

[45]E.A.Knox, Reminiscences of an Octogenarian, 1847-1934 (1935), p.239.

[46]Jones, Survey, p.329.

[47]Quoted in St.Michael's school log book, entry for 28th March 1904, M66/133/Box 1, MAD.

the diocese simply lacked the requisite funds.[48] Even after the 1902 Education Act Catholics were afraid of measures which increased expenditure on education. Especially in parts of the city where the Catholic population was rising schools, such as St.Edward's, Rusholme, were regularly criticised by H.M.Inspectors for inadequate teaching and accommodation. In the 1890s conditions were so bad that the Inspector was twice on the verge of recommending the withdrawl of all state grants.[49] As late as 1932 both Headmaster and Inspector were agreed that overcrowding was still the school's main problem.[50]

Some aspects a Catholic and an Anglican education were not so very different. Catholic schools: for example, used text books which glorified English history at Ireland's expense.[51] Bart Kennedy characterised his education at St.Anne's, Ancoats as being

> taught a great deal about the glory of God and the glory of England, and very little about the art of reading and writing [...] It was a great privilege to be born in England, the teacher said.[52]

However, despite this, it is doubtful that Catholic schools succeeded in encouraging Conservative voting, as Anglican schools apparently did before 1914.[53] This effect would certainly have been

---

[48]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.ii, p.89; McCormack, Vaughan, p.170.

[49]St.Edmund's school log book, 27th November 1893, 7th December 1897. Available from the school.

[50]St.Edward's school log book, 28th January, 22nd August, 13th September 1932.

[51]MCH, 18th March 1906.

[52]Kennedy, Slavery, p.52, 53-4.

[53]For the political effect of denominational schooling in Lancashire see Peter Clarke, Lancashire and the New Liberalism (Cambridge, 1971), pp.53-75. For a more general application of this argument, Kenneth D.Wald, Crosses on the Ballots (Princeton, 1983).

weak at St.Wilfrid's school whilst Terence Corrigan was Headmaster. Born the son of a tenant farmer in County Meath in 1835, for nearly fifty years he ruled at St.Wilfrid's until his retirement in 1902. A prominent Nationalist in Hulme, in 1904 Corrigan was Nationalist candidate for St.George's ward in which stood his old school.[54] Perhaps, as Pat O'Mara recalled of his own time at school, most Catholics teachers compromised: they praised the Empire and remained silent on England's misdeeds in Ireland.[55]

The Church naturally emphasised the religious function of parish schools. Some priests felt that secular teaching was entirely subordinate to the teaching of Church doctrine.[56] This is borne out in comments made about St.Edward's school during the 1920s. Whereas H.M.Inspectors complained about inadequate teaching standards the Diocesan Religious Inspector reported that "The children generally gave evidence of being carefully and efficiently trained in Religious Knowledge."[57] In 1925 Dean Murray of St.Wilfrid's praised his late Headmaster for realising that

> the true function of a Catholic teacher was to train the soul of the child for Heaven and that the foundation of that training should be the moral teaching of Christ as explained and interpreted by the Catholic Church. He had an intense love of his Church [...] He excelled in loyalty to the clergy and in respect for their office, and he instilled that into the children from their earliest years.[58]

---

[54] Harvest, February 1896, April 1908.

[55] O'Mara, Slummy, pp.74-5.

[56] As did Father X of York in the late 1940s, Rowntree and Lavers, Life and Leisure, p.350.

[57] St.Edward's school log book, 29th August 1928.

[58] MCH, 7th February 1925.

This seems to confirm the impression of a number of American historians that Catholic parochial schools were less educationally effective than others because of the Church's emphasis on religion.[59] It also contradicts Sheridan Gilley's claim that in the "long run" parochial schools promoted social mobility.[60]

Formal dogma was probably not as important as parish priests thought. Officially it occupied only half an hour a day. However, children at St.Alban's were taught the Catchecism during what should have been history lessons.[61] The most important effect of a Catholic education was that it emphasised the centrality of the Church to the individual at a very early age, placing the child in contact with, and forcing acceptance of, its authority. Schools were filled by the devout. Nuns taught at nineteen parishes including the largest, St.Patrick's. Lay teachers were often active within parish life, many being church organists, choirmasters or confraternity and sodality presidents.[62] The intimate connection between school and church was made plain when Miss Calahan, the recently retired Head of St.Joseph's Infants', Longsight, was commemorated by a stained glass window in the parish church.[63] The priest was also no stranger

---

[59]Thernstrom, Other Bostonians, p.174; Levine, Irish Politician, p.183.

[60]Gilley, 'Irish diaspora', p.199.

[61]MS, tapes 787(4) and 87.

[62]MS, tape 823(1); MCH, 31st January 1925.

[63]The same honour had been granted to her predecessor, her older sister, MCH, 5th July 1924.

to school, being its manager. He made monthly visits to each classroom and distributed prizes on special occasions.[64] At St.Edward's in the early 1890s he occasionally taught geography.[65]

School discipline, for both civil and religious purposes, was harsh, violent and humiliating. Order was imposed in this crude manner, almost by necessity: before 1914 the certified teacher pupil ratio was in the order of 1:100 for most schools.[66] The strain of trying to educate too many children in overcrowded conditions was too much for some. In 1923 two female teachers at St.Anne's, Ancoats were overwhelmed by the demands imposed upon them. Both left the school in that year, apparently having suffered nervous breakdowns.[67] Despite the occasional brutal act, often perpetrated by nuns, there is no evidence that parents intervened and challenged the school's authority.[68] The children, however, expressed a cynicism about the close relationship between religion and punishment. During the interwar years boys at St.Patrick's sang a rhyme about their Headmaster.

> Jock McIver is a very good man, he goes to church on Sunday,
> He prays to God to give him grace to whack the kids on Monday.[69]

---

[64]The parish priest visited St.Anne's school about once a week in the 1890s, St.Anne's school log book, available from the school. For the frequency of his visits to St.Michael's, see the parish school log book.

[65]St.Edward's school log book, 11th, 18th September 1891.

[66]Educational Statistics of the Diocese of Salford (Manchester, 1905), available WH.

[67]St.Anne's school log book, 18th January 1923.

[68]MS, tapes 507, 60 and 487(1).

[69]Turner, Collyhurst, p.24.

In matters of discipline the school's authority was impressively extensive: pupils were even punished for offences committed outside its bounds. Boys found stealing in class or street at St.Joseph's, Ordsall were caned in front of the whole school.[70] At St.Michael's street fighting was punished by the Head teacher.[71] Within the school, cleanliness was upheld by the threat of the cane which, at St.Patrick's during the 1920s, was often used against the recalcitrant sons of barrow hawkers.[72] These high levels of corporal punishment possibly declined during the 1930s. In 1932 Manchester Local Education Authority sent a representative to St.Edmund's in order discuss the use of "positive" rather than "negative" disciplinary measures.[73] However, good citizenship had not always been found through physical abuse: schools had penny banks and awarded prizes for punctual and regular attendance.[74]

The Church was able to keep watch on how frequently school children attended to their devotions. Every Monday morning each school held a register to discover which children had failed to attend Mass the previous day. In order to prevent lying on the matter some churches distributed tickets at Sunday Mass.[75] Children

---

[70] MS, tape 540.

[71] St.Michael's school log book, 19th March 1890. It is interesting to speculate that this street fight was the result of English-Irish tensions during St.Patrick's Day.

[72] Turner, Collyhurst, pp.23-4.

[73] St.Edmund's school log book, 23rd December 1932.

[74] St.Michael's school log book, 4th January, 9th September 1904. For other examples of this type of reward, St.Edmund's school log book, 20th November 1896, 30th April 1897, St.Anne's school log book, 9th January 1903, 7th December 1906.

[75] MS, tapes 823(1) and 457.

were punished for consistently missing Mass. Before 1914 non-attenders at St.Augustine's were kept in after school had finished.[76] At St.Patrick's during the 1950s, girls were sent to the back of the class if they failed to pass this test. They returned to the front only after confession.[77] On his monthly visits the priest inspected the Mass register and confronted consistent offenders in front of their classmates.[78] Mary Bertenshaw, one such miscreant, recalled how they were treated.

> Both Father Murphy and Sister Theresa showed a marked dislike for any of their school children who hadn't been compelled by their parents to attend church. And they had never forgiven us for fraternising with the 'other side' - the Protestants from the local Sharp Street Ragged School.[79]

This antipathy could take on a rather petty character. Bertenshaw was denied an essay prize because Father Murphy refused to reward non-attenders.[80]

For the majority of children such punitive, and ultimately ineffective, punishment was probably unnecessary. Many parents were only too willing to force their children to attend Mass, even if they were more relaxed about their own conduct. In 1920 the Catholic Federationist noted with pride that seventeen out of twenty parents had prevented their sons attending a municipal secondary school. The parents objected to their children enrolling at a non-Catholic establisment.[81] Moreover, the system of close supervision and control

---

[76]Burke, Lad, p.9.

[77]Turner, Collyhurst, p.74.

[78]MS, tape 487(1).

[79]Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.87; MS, tape 481(1).

[80]Bertenshaw, Sunrise, pp.87-8.

[81]CF, April 1920.

during school years ensured that children were the most devout Catholic cohort: it was only after leaving school that attendance became irregular. Attendance at Catholic schools also made children acutely aware of sectarian rivalries at a very early age: separate education marked a Catholic out as different from a non-Catholic. The manner in which the schools issue strained the loyalties of working class Catholic Liberals and Labourists shows the continued influence of church schools. As Charles Booth noted in the early 1900s the aim of the Catholic school was to instill the Church's principles so firmly into the child "that these may be accepted not loosely, as a garment to be cast off, but as a natural inheritance never entirely lost."[82] In the 1940s Mass Observation interviewed a Catholic youth leader who indicated that this perceived function had not much changed over the years.

> I should say that most of my youngsters know what they're here for, and even though they're too young to have a fixed aim, the fundamental ideas are fixed and have been from early childhood. That's the most impressive thing people notice in favour of religious education controlled by the Roman Catholic Church; and these children I would say are far more easy to handle in an organised club than the products of other educational systems. You don't have to start from scratch if you know what I mean. You have definitely got youngsters with a background of the spiritual.[83]

Mass Observation also discovered that, although the general population's ideas about religion deviated wildly from orthodox dogma, Catholics enjoyed a greater harmony with their Church.[84] It seems clear that the Catholic parochial school was too much of a formative influence for most adherents to forget.

---

[82]Booth, Religious Influences, p.251.

[83]Mass Observation, Puzzled People (1947), p.142.

[84]Mass Observation, Puzzled People, p.42, 44-6, 67.

4. Adolescent leisure.

The principal targets of the Church's initiatives in the field of leisure provision were adolescent working class males. Their school days behind them, they stood on the verge of entering the non-Catholic world of work. This group was thought to be the most vulnerable to anti-Catholic influences but also the most easily protected. They were seen as being at the cross-roads of life: one direction led to continued devotion, the other to irreligion.[85] The Church shared many of the worries prevalent within a whole range of religious, social and political organisations in the late nineteenth century that the urban teenager was dangerously out of control.[86] Adult males were in this sense more of a lost cause, having already travelled a distance down their chosen path. Adolescent girls and women, because they were thought to be less contaminated by the world of work, were felt to be more secure.[87] When parishes reluctantly provided girls with leisure it was meant to encourage them in domestic and feminine pursuits. The 1912 programme for St.John's Girls' Club, for example, consisted of sewing, cookery, singing and elocution.[88]

---

[85]Harvest, February 1911.

[86]John Springall, Youth, Empire and Society. British Youth Movements, 1883-1940 (1977), pp.14-15, 45-6.

[87]This seems to have been something of an illusion, for Lanchashire at least. The county was famous for the high participation of women in the textile industry. See Jill Liddington and Jill Norris, One Hand Tied Behind Us (1984), pp.47-63.

[88]Harvest, July 1912. For the similar position at St.Anne's, Ancoats, see Harvest, July 1909.

The Church realised that confraternaties only appealed to the "pious" rather than the "rough". To bring the latter group back into the Catholic domain it recognised that other methods had to be tried.[89] Education had little appeal: parochial extension courses palpably failed to attract many. In 1900 only 3,792 young Catholics were enrolled on such courses in both Manchester and Salford. Females outnumbered males by two to one.[90] Cardinal Vaughan was deeply concerned with the Church's failure in this regard.[91] During the 1890s, in the face of the perennial attractions of the pub and the increasing prosletysing efforts of other denominations, the Church began in earnest to fill the gap. By the turn of the century the salvation of Catholic youth had become one of the Church's most important tasks.

In some ways this was solely a defensive reaction to the initiatives of others. In 1901 St.John's held a summer camp simply because other denominations were using them.[92] Similarly, one of St.Aloysius's football team's more important functions was to discourage lads (none of them over seventeen) from visiting pubs.[93] Sometimes, however, leisure was conceived as having a more positive

---

[89]Harvest, March 1902.

[90]Harvest, January 1901.

[91]Harvest, October 1899.

[92]Harvest, January 1902, May 1905.

[93]Harvest, June 1894, January 1902, May 1905.

role. The Catholic Boys' Brigade was seen as creating

> a consolidated Catholic manhood, eager and anxious to take part in any matter which will help forward the onward march of the Church.[94]

Lads' clubs were seen as encouraging social improvement amongst Catholics.[95] It was also hoped that both clubs and the Brigade would enable the Church to overcome class division amongst adherents.[96] It was felt that leisure would give the boys, as the schools supposedly had done, a sense of common interest, latent in their shared religion but only made real by social contact.[97] The object was to isolate these adolescents from unrespectable and anti-Catholic influences and to improve them in both social and religious terms: to make them "As a Lilly Among Thorns".[98] Like the Boy's Brigade, parochial leisure facilities would create

> ...a Centre of Catholic loyalty and Catholic activity; each a refuge from the allurements of Socialism, the temptations of the streets, [and] the poisonous companionship of the loafer...[99]

During the 1890s the philanthropy of Edward Caulfield, a wealthy merchant and member of St.Chad's parish, Cheetham Hill attracted the Church's admiring attention. He founded, funded and administered two lads' clubs and one girls' club in St.William's parish located in

---

[94]CF, May 1919.

[95]Harvest, June 1899.

[96]Harvest, July 1899, November 1914.

[97]Harvest, June 1894, November 1919.

[98]The motto the clubs attached to St.Anne's, Ancoats, Harvest, November 1914.

[99]Harvest, June 1909.

the heart of Angel Meadow's slums.[100] Being a member of the bench and a devout Catholic - he had paid for St.Chad's Rosary Chapel - Caulfield wanted to diminish the influence of the pub over young men, provide an alternative to street fighting and increase their devotion to the Church. Being extremely wealthy, he was able to put his ideas into action. Although his work in the Meadow was said to cost him £400 per annum he was also able to help St.Charles' Young Mens' Club in Pendleton.[101]

Angel Meadow was the poorest part of the city, the district's population being mainly composed of unskilled, casual workers many of whom lived in lodging houses. During the late 1890s the Meadow was described as possessing

> ...long lines of dreary streets, branching off into mazes of narrow, sunless courts and alleys, [there is] a depressing air of poverty, neglect and dilapidation pervading all [...] To arrive at Angel Meadow conditions you have to compound the peculiar ingredients of the atmosphere of our city: the damp and fog of the low-lying districts, the peculiar odours which pervade the persons and homes of the prevailing class of inhabitants, the self-assertive and penetrating scents of the fried fish shops, and the nauseous exhalations which hang around in consequence of the many glaring breaches of sanitary fitness and order.[102]

At the best of times drunkeness and prostitution were common; about one third of the population were paupers.[103] This was an area also crawling with prosleytisers. St.William's, despite being the parish

---

[100]The following discussion, except when otherwise stated, is based upon articles and reports in the Harvest for March, April, May 1893; March, April, May, July, October 1894; December 1896; January, April, December 1897; January 1898.

[101]Harvest, May 1891, January 1921.

[102]Reverand J.E.Mercer, 'The condition of life in Angel Meadow', Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society, 1897, p.162, 169.

[103]Mercer, 'Angel Meadow', p.172-5.

with the highest density of Catholics in Manchester (50 per cent), had the worst level of attendance at week-day Mass in the city (0.4 per cent) whilst its confraternity structure appears to have been almost defunct. Caulfield, therefore, was confronted by the dual face of intense poverty and apparent irreligion.

Caulfield established his first Catholic Working Lads' Club in the late 1880s. By the early 1890s there were two such clubs, one for "better class" boys able to pay a nominal subscription and the other for those who could ill-afford even that. This latter club, popularly known as 'the Home', for it compensated for what the boy's own family had failed to do, had at least 300 members in 1894. It was kept in a state of order by a well-defined authority structure, at the top of which came members of St.Chad's Society of Vincent de Paul. Thirty members of St.William's Guild of the Sacred Heart acted as NCOs. Every Sunday they collected members for Mass by calling at their homes. When the Bishop visited the club he rewarded these young men for their exertions and, whereas the rest of the club merely received pictures of the Sacred Heart, Guild members were also awarded with badges of distinction. The girls had to wait until 1894 for their club. This was granted to them only after they had protested to the visiting Bishop about their neglect. Initially their club was administered by the Sisters of Charity and membership restricted to the seventy members of the Guild of St.Agnes. Later members were vetted so they would not endanger these girls' "excellent spirit". Despite their common paternity the clubs were kept apart, underlining differences of gender and status: each took

separate summer trips. By 1897, with the consolidation of the two lads' clubs into one much bigger building, older and married men began to be catered for.

One of the main purposes behind Catholic leisure in general, and Caulfield's clubs in particular, was to improve church attendance. This was all the more vital in the Meadow where poverty and irreligion were at their worst. Each club member was expected to attend Mass every Sunday and Communion at Easter and Christmas. This religious intent was vividly demonstrated at the opening of the girls' club. Dressed all in white the girls processed from St.William's to their new club which was blessed by the parish priest, Father Thompson. As one boy declared, in an address given to the Bishop in 1894, "Though we are poor we are none the less loyal to our Church and we glory and boast in being Irish Catholic young men." 'Improvement' in civic conduct was not neglected - a penny bank was established. As a consequence of the clubs street gang fighting, or 'scuttling'as it was colloquially called, was thought to be in decline. It was no coincidence that Caulfield, on at least one occasion, brought some fellow magistrates to visit the clubs, which they described in glowing terms.

The clubs, therefore, had some effect. At one time or another they probably had as members the vast majority of Catholic boys in the parish. However, the condition of the economy set limits on the clubs' successes. A depression in 1896 produced a noticeable fall both in deposits to the penny bank and attendance at Christmas Communion. In 1893 270 lads attended Christmas Communion. This number fell to 150 in 1896 and had only recovered to 200 by

Christmas 1897. Nor did they fully succeed in reforming conduct: even Father Thompson was forced to admit that some members were still involved in street fighting.

It is a moot point why so many boys and young men attended such clubs. Caulfield hoped that the facilities provided by his clubs were largely unimportant and that members thought the religious element paramount. Amusements were generally seen by those in charge as merely a means to "entice" boys into Catholic clubs.[104] To the youngsters, however, things might have appeared somewhat differently. In a context of few alternatives, apart from the pub, the club provided free trips, treats and somewhere to socialise without police interference.[105] Temperance was not strictly enforced by Caulfield, who realised that a strict line on such matters would have only been counter-productive.[106] He even permitted gambling for small stakes, although - as with drink - it clearly did not find favour with him. In terms of an informal contract, therefore, attendance at Mass was a small price to pay.

The British Catholic Boys' Brigade (CBB) movement was another Catholic initiative which largely followed a model set outside the Church. This was the Boys' Brigade, established in Scotland in the mid-1880s, whose success in turn spawned Anglican and Jewish versions during the early 1890s.[107] The CBB was, like its progenitors, a formal and highly structured organisation with close affinities, if not actual then sentimental, with the British armed

---

[104] Harvest, June 1899.

[105] MCN, 17th December 1892; Mercer, 'Angel Meadow', p.171.

[106] This tolerance was shared by other Catholics, Harvest, July 1899.

[107] Springall, Youth, pp.37-8.

services. The aim was similar to Catholic leisure as a whole: to turn irreligous Catholic roughs into respectable and devout citizens. To this end, the first two companies were formed in the slums of Dublin and Southwark in the middle 1890s.[108] The religious element, as with all Catholic leisure, was presumed to be dominant and the highlight of any company's week was said to be Sunday Mass when members attended church in uniform.[109] When Monsignour Gome asked a collection of girl guides '"Where do Guides guide one to?" he would not have been surprised that their reply was '"To Heaven."'[110]

The movement, however, did not prosper in Manchester, and it did least well amongst the poor Irish, i.e. those it was meant to influence the most.[111] The reason behind the Brigade's insistence upon uniform was, in part, that class differences would then be less obvious. A uniform, it was hoped, would make all boys equal. It was, therefore, ironic that in 1911 a full kit cost 18s.6d., about the same as a labourer's weekly wage. Few Catholics could afford this luxury.[112] Even so, due to the movement's strong military associations it is doubtful that it would ever have become popular amongst the city's Irish. Irish parents, both before and after the establishment of the Free State, were concerned that the Brigade encouraged boys to become members of the British Army.[113] Nor were all priests

---

108 Springall, Youth, pp.43-4; Harvest, March 1902.

109 Harvest, January 1902.

110 Harvest, November 1924.

111 A failure shared by all variations on the Boys Brigade theme, Springall, Youth, p. 39, 121.

112 Harvest, February 1911.

113 MCH, 7th January 1933.

convinced about the movement's worth.[114] Organisers were frequently forced to deny that their movement was in any way militaristic. Such denials must have rung hollow when Canon Wilfrid Dallow, one of the movement's most active supporters, thought it a "very interesting and pleasing fact" that nearly 3,000 graduates of Catholic Industrial Schools had fought in the Boer War.[115]

Whereas about 13 per cent of non-Catholic adolescent males were members of similar movements in the city's working class districts prior to 1914 by 1910 there were only two Boys' Brigade companies in Manchester.[116] These were located in the prosperous and largely English parishes of the Holy Name and Mount Carmel, Blackley.[117] In that year, however, Bishop Casartelli gave the movement his official support and by 1914 there were 4,000 cadets organised in forty companies within the diocese. Many of these were among the first to perish in the First World War.[118] Of the eighty one members of Mount Carmel's Scout Troop in Blackley, for example, seventy six joined the forces. Of this number thirty five were either killed or wounded.[119]

---

[114]Father Walsh of St.John's certainly wasn't, Harvest, July 1905.

[115]Harvest, December 1902.

[116]Michael Blanch, 'Imperialism, nationalism and organised youth' in John Clarke, Chas Chrichter, Richard Johnson (eds.), Working Class Culture. Studies in History and Theory (1979), p.110.

[117]Harvest, June 1909, March 1913.

[118]Letter from the Cadet Colonel of the Salford Diocese to Casartelli, 1924, Societies file, WH.

[119]Bolton, Salford, p.202.

In the War's wake a partially successful revival occurred, but the diocesan Brigade was soon in financial difficulties. This led the Catholic authorities to affiliate to the East and West Lancashire Territorials. This entitled the CBB to claim money from the War Office, something which could only have confirmed Irish suspicions.[120] In spite of this aid, by 1924 there was only one company left in Manchester, that of Corpus Christi. This lone company finally disbanded in 1930 after the War Office discontinued its grant due to economies.[121] During the interwar period, caught between Irish suspicions and a collapsing local economy, the Catholic Scout movement faired little better. In 1928 there were only 1,000 Scouts in the whole diocese. By 1933 there were only four troops in Manchester with a mere 259 members.[122]

5. Adult leisure.

The purposes underlying Catholic provision of leisure, welfare and education for adolescents and adults were essentially the same. However, due to the shortage of resources adult leisure was less extensive and less emphasis was placed upon it. This was because most time and money was put into the saving of the supposedly more vulnerable child and youth. Moreover, in the case of the men, at least, it seems that those adults who participated in such

---

[120]Springall suggests that the Church Lads' Brigade declined after 1918 because it had also chosen to affiliate to the Territorials, a move which put it at variance with the prevalent anti-militarist sentiment of the interwar period. Springall, Youth, pp.40-1.

[121]Letter, Cadet Colonel, 1924; Report by the Cadet Colonel of the Salford Diocese, 5th September 1930, Societies file, WH.

[122]Harvest, January 1928; see Appendix 11.

activities were already members of the devout. Unlike the case of Catholic adolescents, the Church was largely preaching to the converted.

Women were considered to be a somewhat different case, especially those of child-bearing age. This was not because they were considered more important in themselves or that they were thought to be more vulnerable than men. It was due more to their influence over children - both physical and spiritual. Women, as mothers, were seen as having a decisive role in the making of a Catholic. However, it would be a mistake to think that female association with the Church began and ended with their maternal responsibilities. For a number of working class women the parish church provided a cheap, collective form of leisure. As one labourer's wife recalled of interwar St.Alban's

> There was always something going on at the church, either a potato pie party - all the women would make a potato pie and you'd have a piano going or a fiddle or something - and Whist drives. In the summer we'd have a days outing.[123]

The most a parish offered adult men was their own social club, a pre-condition for membership was usually regular attendance at Mass. The 1903 rules of St.Patrick's Club, for example, stated that membership was restricted to "Practical Catholics" only. Even here clerical control was not relinquished - the parish priest was president of the club and of the two vice-presidents only one was a layman.[124] About the turn of the century a number of parishes also

---

123MS, tape 272(2).

124Societies file, WH.

formed Lecture Associations. Their objects - like those of the first Association which was established in St.Anne's parish, Ancoats in 1899 - were

> to extend the knowledge of Catholic principles and practices, to afford opportunities for debate on subjects of interest, and to promote and foster social intercourse between the men of St.Anne's parish.[125]

The Association quickly spawned a number of imitators in the city.[126] Meetings took place on Sunday afternoons after Mass. Despite the enthusiastic coverage in the Harvest it is unlikely that such lectures were heard by more than a small minority. Nevertheless although during its first year an average of only fifty men attended these gatherings a remarkable 1,800 Catholic Truth Society (CTS) pamphlets were sold at meetings.[127] These members evidently sold copies to friends and neighbours.[128] The Association spawned social activities: during summers members went on rambles.[129] In 1903 activities also included a debate and social evening with members of St.Bridget's Association. Women in the parish were also invited to attend some debates although not, it appears, in order to participate. In that year, their first flush of zeal now gone, members sold less than 500 CTS leaflets.[130]

---

125 Harvest, November 1899.

126 Harvest, February 1901.

127 Harvest, March 1900.

128 Harvest, March 1901.

129 Societies file, Catholic Lecture Association, St.Anne's branch, WH.

130 5th Annual Report, Catholic Lecture Association, St.Anne's branch, 1903-4, St.Anne's Box, WH.

Women as mothers were somewhat better provided for. Members of the Catholic Women's League (CWL) established a Mother's and Babies' Welcome in St.Anne's parish, Ancoats in 1909.[131] This was run by a small band of middle class women. It is doubtful that many, if any, lived in the parish: Rose Hyland, the League's benefactress, lived in Victoria Park, the secretary in Old Trafford. The Welcome was set two objects, both

> to educate our mothers in the proper method of feeding, clothing and general care of their children, and to encourage them to take a more serious view of their parental responsibilities regarding the spiritual and physical welfare of their little ones.

In its first year nearly 100 mothers regularly attended the Welcome. By 1912 numbers had fallen to sixty. The Welcome's mission to care for the spiritual and physical well-being of both mother and baby were intimately intertwined: weekly meetings began with a hymn and ended with a prayer. Lectures on how to care for baby alternated with medical inspections carried out by a doctor. The parish priest was in constant attendance.

The Welcome's activities were not limited just to these meetings. Expectant mothers were given free milk and food. They were also encouraged to join a thrift fund which, for every shilling saved, the CWL's chairman added a penny. The volunteer workers also visited mothers in their homes and encouraged irregular attenders at Mass to improve their habits. The Welcome also provided opportunities for leisure - there were picnics during summers and

---

[131]The following account is based upon the Harvest, April 1909, February, June 1911, February 1912, February 1913.

parties at Christmas. At the Christmas 1911 party mothers had the extra treat of being given a quarter pound of tea by the Bishop of Salford.

The Welcome proved a popular model emulated in a number of other parishes in the city. One was established in St.John's by the CWL during 1912, in 1918 two Child Welfare Centres were formed in St.Aloysius's and the Holy Name parishes by the Ladies of Charity of St.Vincent De Paul.[132] However, scarcity of both money and personnel restricted the number of Welcomes in Manchester. Moreover, after 1918, regulations drawn up by the state also imposed an increasing number of restraints: in 1924 the original St.Anne's Welcome was closed because it failed to meet requirements set down by the Board of Education.[133]

6. Drink.

The traditional conflict between drink and devotion obsessed many, if not all, religious bodies during the late nineteenth century. Charles Booth's picture of Sundays in turn of the century London suggests that the day's structure was remarkably similar for non-attenders and attenders alike. This was apart from the fact that whereas at mid-day and in the evening the former left home for the pub the latter went to church.[134] In Manchester's Catholic parishes the choice between God and grog does not seem to have been mutually exclusive. Indeed, the Catholic Church in interwar Bolton so

---

[132]Harvest, February 1913, February 1914, June 1918.

[133]Harvest, March 1924.

[134]Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People of London. Final Volume. Notes on Social Influences and Conclusion (1904), pp.47-8.

offended the sensibilities of Mass Observation that it stated that the Church "freely permits and never opposes the pub."[135] This was, however, something of an exaggeration.

The Catholic Church did not neglect the question of excessive drinking, even if it fought shy of condemning drink as such. In 1900 parish priests thought alcohol had a powerfully damaging effect upon the hold of the faith over the people.[136] They shared the feeling, prevalent in the late nineteenth century, that drink was one of the most pernicious causes of poverty. The incumbent at the Holy Name observed amongst some of his parishioners "Poverty caused by intemperance leading to dreadful neglect of children."[137] The underlying motive for Cardinal Manning's conversion to the temperance cause in the late 1860s was that drink, by causing poverty amongst Catholics, prevented them progressing up the social ladder and keeping true to the Church. By remaining in poverty Catholics also impeded the Church's accumulation of status and power within Protestant society.[138] Therefore, the problem of drink had to be faced. Manning erred, so far as most Catholics were concerned, by being too friendly with the Nonconformist United Kingdom Alliance, which was seen as yet one more vehicle for proselytism. However, he soon made a concession to the separatists by forming the exclusively Catholic League of the Cross.[139]

---

[135]Mass Observation, Pub and the People. A Worktown Study (1970), pp.163-66.

[136]1900 LVR.

[137]1900 LVR.

[138]Pingle and Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning' p.502.

[139]Pingle and Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning', pp.486-88, 495.

This initiative was followed in the Salford Diocese by Bishop Vaughan who established his own Crusade.[140] Vaughan, however, like many Catholic clerics, seems to have had an ambivalent attitude to temperance. Although feeling that a restriction of the number of public houses was necessary he was by no means an abstainer. His favoured remedy for alcohol abuse was the creation of continental-style beer gardens which sold only light beers. As a means of reducing over-indulgence he also wanted pubs to become places where families were welcome.[141] His successor at Salford, Bilsborrow, was similarly willing to call for the closing of public houses on Sundays but refused outright to be labelled a supporter of temperance.[142]

A limited number of the city's parishes held temperance meetings, but membership of parochial Crusades do not seem to have included many adults. St.Wilfrid's branch of the Salford Diocesan Crusade Against Intemperance held almost weekly meetings during 1891 and had an impressive 800 members. These were, however, nearly all school children.[143] Such campaigns, like the one at St.Chad's in 1909, also contained a number of "moderate drinkers".[144]

Manning's creation of a 'Truce of St.Patrick' which granted an indulgence to Catholics who abstained on the Saint's day was one means of encouraging moderation in drink.[145] During the early 1880s

---

[140]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.i, pp.249-50.

[141]Snead-Cox, Vaughan, vol.i, pp.433-37.

[142]Harvest, April 1899.

[143]MG, 29th April 1890, 17th March 1891.

[144]Harvest, January 1909.

[145]Dingle and Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning', p.488.

St.Patrick's celebrations conducted in Manchester's Free Trade Hall were organised by the Salford Diocesan Crusade.[146] During the 1882 meeting Canon Kershaw, a former President of the Crusade made a light-hearted plea

> that, as might have happened in years gone by, none of his Irish flock would run into excess on that evening and get into trouble - (Laughter).[147]

The audience's response reveals the improbability that Kershaw's request was followed by many Catholics.

Despite all efforts temperance was never enthusiastically embraced by the Church nor by many individual Catholics. In 1881 Manning's League of the Cross had only fifteen branches outside London. By the early 1890s the St.Patrick's Day Temperance meeting had been supplanted by one dedicated to the achievement of Home Rule.[148] Even the most devout Catholics continued to drink. Alcohol was even, however reluctantly, served by Catholic organisations. When St.Patrick's Mens' Club was opened in 1877 only coffee was served; within three years beer had been introduced.[149] Similarly, the "traditional meeting place" for the parochial Old Boys Association during the interwar years was the Kings' Arms on Rochdale Road.[150] Indeed, many publicans were considered to be amongst the most devout

---

[146] MG, 18th March 1881.

[147] MG, 18th March 1882.

[148] Pingle and Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning', p.495.

[149] Anon, St.Patrick's Silver Jubilee Souvenir (Manchester, 1961), no page numbers.

[150] St. Patrick's Souvenir, no page numbers.

of Catholics.[151] By the interwar period the parochial temperance campaign was a thing of the past. Priests tended to accept drinking as inevitable and relatively harmless. Certainly, their own experience must have contradicted the idea that drinking automatically precluded attendance at Sunday Mass. As Mick Burke recalled, Catholics could do both.

> At St.Michael's there was an 11.30 Mass and Father Ryan would say, 'You come in here to get to the Dan O'Connell [the neighbouring pub] when it opens. So I want a decent collection - put in big silver, not threepenny bits!' They used to say the life story of Steve Donoghue was written on the back of the New Testaments at St.Michael's - bets written out by the O'Connell's customers![152]

7. Conclusion.

This chapter has investigated the extent of the Catholic Church's social effort which had the expressed objective of modifying both religious and civic conduct. This effort was a wide-ranging, although uneven, enterprise which concentrated on children, male adolescents and women in their roles of wife and mother: adult males were largely beyond the grasp of the Church. The chapter therefore implicitly questioned Hugh McLeod's comment that Catholicism was "the only form of religion that integrated its adherents into a working class environment".[153] The Church, however ineffectually and imperfectly, attempted to reforge that environment.

---

[151]As were Martin Bushell and Mr.McIntyre of St.Francis's both of whom kept superior pubs in Gorton, Harvest, May 1909, MCH, 12th February 1910.

[152]Neil Richardson, The Pubs of Old Ancoats (Swinton, 1987), p.3.

[153]McLeod, Religion, p.72.

In the sense that the Church wanted to change popular attitudes it largely failed. It was unable to alter the importance of drink within working class life nor to encourage thrift. Catholics generally remained poorer than non-Catholics throughout this period. Similarly, what it considered low levels of devotion continued, especially amongst adult males. The Church succeeded, however, in impeding assimilation, particularly through the provision of separate education. To a lesser extent the creation of other exclusively Catholic milieu and the provision of welfare underlined in a striking way the distinct nature of the Catholic identity. The Church served as a pole of attraction. It was at its strongest during the individual's youth but still retained an influence during adulthood. This can be seen in marriage patterns. It was also no accident that the schools question was the one political issue to galvanise Catholics, Irish or English, into united action on behalf of their Church.

Chapter Five. A Sectarian Working Class?

1. Introduction.

The following two chapters seek to examine the place of the Irish and Catholic population within the cultural life of Manchester's working class. Workers in the city were not pronouncedly sectarian - unlike their counterparts in Liverpool and Glasgow. Nevertheless, differences of nationality and religion along with competition between Irish and English for scarce jobs influenced ethnic relations into the 1930s and beyond. This chapter takes a general view of the question and assesses the impact of these three factors on conduct. The succeeding chapter analyses the structure of working class culture in more detail and points to areas of life where such differences remained and where they were disappearing or seen to be of diminishing importance.

2. Manchester's working class culture.

Many of the works on the Irish and Catholics in Britain concentrate on their experience in Glasgow and Liverpool. These two cities dominate horizons. In both these places the divide between religious and national groups seems to have been conveniently clear and dichotomous.[1] Manchester - and most of the other places of Irish settlement - should not be seen in quite the same light. Both Liverpool and Glasgow contained more Irish-born than Manchester. In 1911 3.7 per cent of Glaswegians and 4.6 per cent of Liverpudlians

---

[1]Tom Gallagher, 'A Tale of two cities: communal strife in Glasgow and Liverpool before 1914' in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City; Joan Smith, 'Labour traditions in Glasgow and Liverpool', History Workshop Journal, no.17, Spring 1984.

were born in Ireland whereas only 3.0 per cent of Salfordians and 2.8 per cent of Mancunians had been.[2] Both of the former cities were also home to extremely powerful Orange movements enjoying strong ties with Ulster. Despite an early start, Manchester's Orangeism had become peripheral by 1890. Whereas in Manchester Irish and Catholics lived side-by-side with their English Protestant working class counterparts, in Liverpool a 'no-man's land' separated the two communities of Protestant Netherfield and Catholic Scotland.[3] In Glasgow football took on a sectarian meaning: Catholics supported Celtic whereas Protestants had affiliations with Rangers.[4] Although support for Liverpool and Everton does not seem to have been similarly divided, local folklore is insistent that it did.[5] In contrast, football in Manchester does not trace its origins to religious rivalries: neither City nor United cultivated sectarian support.[6]

As contemporaries noted at the turn of the century, hostile feelings were prevalent amongst the poorer members of the city's working class. Within this group religion, Ireland and competition for jobs could still, on occasion at least, put relations under strain.[7] Manchester was not unique in this regard: in both interwar

---

[2]See Appendix 2 and Smith, 'Labour traditions', Table 1.

[3]P.J.Waller, Democracy and Sectarianism. A Political and Social History of Liverpool, 1868-1939 (Liverpool, 1981), pp.237-41.

[4]Bill Murray, The Old Firm (Edinburgh, 1984).

[5]Tony Mason, 'The Blues and the Reds', Transactions Of The Historic Society Of Lancashire And Cheshire, vol.cxxxiv, 1984, pp.123-6.

[6]For United's origins see Geoffrey Green, There's Only One United (1978), pp.189-202.

[7]Harvest, July 1899; MCN, 14th April 1900.

Leeds and London - like Manchester not famous for their sectarianism - Irish and Catholics were feared and resented for their distinct nationality and religion.[8] Robert Roberts has drawn an extremely influential, although at times misleading, picture of the place of the Irish and Catholics in the working class district of Ordsall, Salford. He has confirmed the point that, in spite of the city's pre-1914 reputation for more peaceful conduct between rival social groups, an intense antipathy underlay relations. He states that the Irish and Catholics largely lived at one remove from English Protestants.[9] His is a powerfully drawn picture of working class culture which finds an echo in other autobiographies of the period, both in relation to the general structure of proletarian society and to the peculiarly lowly position held by Irish Catholics within it.[10] Roberts's account also has much in common with Lynn Lees's use of the term 'subculture'.

Roberts characterises Manchester's proletarian culture as stratified and hierarchical: social classification was largely determined by income and type of work. Poverty, however, could be mitigated by "respectable" conduct.[11] Teachers and clerks were above reproach whereas artisans, shopkeepers and publicans stood at the top of parochial society. The unskilled were at the very foot of this social ladder.[12] Therefore, in simple economic terms many Irish

---

[8]For London, White, Worst Street, p.105; for Leeds, Richard Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy (1963), p.118.

[9]Robert Roberts, Classic Slum (1983) and A Ragged Schooling (1984).

[10]For Salford, Walter Greenwood, There Was a Time (1967); for Oswaldtwistle, Mary McCarthy, Generation in Revolt (1953).

[11]Roberts, Slum, pp.13, 17, 19-21, 30-1.

[12]Roberts, Slum, p. 14, 17-18.

began at the bottom of the heap. Moreover, even within the unskilled population Irish immigrants "formed the lowest socio-economic stratum." Up to 1914 "differences of race, religion, culture and status kept the English and Irish apart."[13] It was impossible for either side to make friends with one another.[14] Even established Irish were considered to be "no class".[15] Catholics of whatever nationality were also mistrusted whereas adherence to Catholicism did not confer - as with other denominations - any status.[16] The Irish minority was also subject to a constant, sniggering derision and occasional physical attack by the majority.[17] A whole set of popular beliefs and prejudices also surrounded the Irish. Ironically, for a critic of this popular prejudice, Roberts retained at least some of its preconceptions. Accordingly, he states that the Irish were more deferential to authority figures and much more superstitious than their English counterparts.[18]

Hostility and ridicule, however, weren't simply due to prejudices based upon Irish national and religious origin, they were also connected to the town dweller's patronising view of the country. The 'gorbies', living on Salford's rural fringe, were similarly considered a fit subject for ridicule by self-consciously

---

[13]Roberts, Slum, pp.22-3.

[14]Roberts, Slum, p.170.

[15]Roberts, Slum, p.110.

[16]Roberts, Slum, p.170.

[17]Roberts, Slum, p.159, 183.

[18]Roberts, Slum, p.23; Schooling, p.131.

sophisticated members of the working class. This group of country folk was also seen, in a more ominous light, as a pool of potential 'scab' labour.[19]

Despite its qualities Roberts's account presents an overdrawn, simplified and static picture of working class life. In fact, in both Classic Slum and Ragged Schooling he often contradicts his own bold description of the Irish population's lowly and 'outcast' status. His example of the headmistress 'Mrs.O'T' illustrates that Irish birth and Catholic faith could be balanced by superior occupation.[20] The Irish, therefore, provoked no one set reaction. As has been shown, however, the Irish were much more likely to be found in low-class occupations which, unlike teaching, conferred no compensatory status. Yet even when the Irish were firmly set in the unskilled milieu the English response was not as Roberts might have at first led us to believe - at least one pawnbroker believed that a 'good Catholic' could be trusted.[21]

As already suggested, despite not being pronouncedly and constantly sectarian elements of Manchester society in general and the city's working class in particular were still occasionally exercised by issues associated with religion, Ireland and competition for jobs. The following three sections outline these persistent points of conflict.

---

[19]Roberts, Slum, p.30; Schooling, p.169.

[20]Roberts, Slum, p.171.

[21]Roberts, Slum, p.26. Other contradictory examples are given in this and the following chapter.

3. Religion.

Religion was the most frequent cause of hostilities between the Irish and English working class in Manchester. If the era of the Murphy riots was long past, religion continued to be assiduously mined by a number of public speakers. Such figures mainly operated in Liverpool and Glasgow, the remaining enclaves of Protestant extremism until well after 1945.[22] In Liverpool religion could still provoke mob violence up to the eve of the First World War.[23] In Manchester, however, religious conflict was conducted at a much lower level of intensity.

Manchester's last recognisably religious 'riot' took place in Canal Street, Miles Platting, on a Sunday afternoon in July 1888. Between 100 and 150 of the city's Orangemen deliberately processed through a predominantly Irish district, obviously aware of the provocative nature of such an act. Trouble began when women and children in the street hooted and jeered the parade. A child threw a stone, which one of the Protestant processionists promptly hurled back. A melee swiftly followed with one woman reportedly crying "murder the heathens!"; it took forty policemen over half an hour to restore the district to peace. As a result of the attack ten Catholics were sentenced to a variety of prison terms. So far as the law was concerned, the Orangemen were blameless. The local press, however, was divided on the matter. The Manchester Guardian saw it

---

[22]For Murphy, Arnstein, 'Murphy riots'. As late as 1930 Alexander Ratcliffe, "Scotland's modern John Knox" was lecturing on a similar theme to Murphy, that of 'The life of a Carmelite nun'. On one of his rare tours outside of Scotland his meeting was broken up by a group of Newcastle Catholics singing 'Faith of our fathers'. MCH, 1st February 1930.

[23]Waller, Democracy and Sectarianism, pp.237-41.

as evidence of an Irish "premeditated attack" whilst the Manchester Saturday Half Penny was inclined to think the Orangemen "morally blameable". It nevertheless concluded on the comforting note that "such a display of religious intolerance [...] is happily a rare occurrence in Manchester."[24]

Despite the optimism of this sentiment all was not placid. Although the 1888 riot was the last of its kind religious hostilities were not suspended, let alone finally abolished. During the 1920s one Irish respondent has suggested that along the Oldham Road in Collyhurst there were still "bits o'tiffs" on July 12th.[25] The position after the late 1880s was, however, a dramatic improvement on the earlier part of the century when the city had acted as England's Orange capital. The first Orange lodge was established in 1798 not in Liverpool, but in Manchester. Similarly, the first recorded mainland Orange riot occurred in the city on July 12th 1807 when members paraded through a Catholic district, thus setting what was to become a familiar pattern. For at least the first third of the nineteenth century Orangeism in Manchester was more extensive than its Liverpool counterpart.[26] In this period July was an annual round of days-long sectarian riots and street fights.[27] By the late 1880s, however, the centre of Orangeism had been firmly shifted to Lancashire's second city. In 1871 there were only 2,000 lodge members in both Manchester and Salford, compared with 17,000

---

[24]This account based on MG, 9th, 13th July 1888; Manchester Saturday Half Penny, 14th July 1888; MCN, 14th July 1888.

[25]MS, tape 122(1).

[26]Hereward Senior, Orangeism in Ireland and Britain, 1795-1836 (1966), pp.151-5, 305.

[27]Connolly, 'Little brother be at peace', p.199.

in Liverpool in 1889.[28] When the Loyal Orange Institute of England met in the Manchester Athaneum in 1912 Liverpool's representatives inevitably dominated proceedings.[29] The Conservative Working Mens' Association of Lancashire and Cheshire was also largely sustained by members from the Liverpool area.[30]

Apart from occasional flourishes, as in 1888, Manchester's Orange movement became at least publicly dormant. July 12th was a quiet time which went unreported in the local press - unlike St.Patrick's Day. However, individual Orangemen were found amongst the Established Church's keenest lay activists. John James Hazlehurst, who became Manchester diocese's youngest church warden on taking up the post at St.Michael's, Angel Meadow during the 1890s was an Orangeman.[31] Lodge members were widely dispersed throughout the city, although a 'colony' was said to exist in New Islington, Ancoats in the early 1890s.[32] At the turn of the century there were also some Orange members of the Collyhurst's Albert Memorial church.[33] Oral respondents do not mention the existence of areas strongly associated with Orangeism. One has recalled that "one or two" lived in Rever Street but denied that there was a distinct community in north Manchester.[34] Members more commonly lived

---

[28]Tebbut, Ethnic Stereotypes, p.7; Waller, Democracy and Sectarianism, p.95.

[29]MG, 27th April 1912.

[30]MG, 2nd June 1913.

[31]Manchester Studies Photographic Collection, Manchester Polytechnic, deposit 111.

[32]MCN, 10th October 1891.

[33]Postcard, c.1900, M140/1/23/4, MAD.

[34]MS, tape 794.

side-by-side with Catholics. Indeed, in the district's 'Shamrock' pub during the 1930s Orangemen and Catholics were said to drink together quite amicably.[35] Whilst some made their individual peace others persisted in registering a sullen hostility.[36] The decline in Orangeism continued apace in the early twentieth century; by 1922 there were only nine lodges in Manchester district with little more than 200 active members.[37]

If a vibrant proletarian Orangeism was absent in Manchester, there was still a number of militantly Protestant organisations. These were, however, largely middle class movements which looked to their Liverpool brethren for a lead. The Northern Protestant Electors' Council, National Protestant League, and Protestant Reformation Society all had branches in the city. Each possessed close ties with Orangeism, opposed ritualism within the Established Church and held a general antipathy for the Catholic Church.[38] One such body was the Manchester Protestant Thousand, established in 1898, which primarily desired to stem "the tide of Popery under its manifold agencies." The Thousand was a union of some forty influential figures within Manchester's political society, both Conservative and Liberal. One of its other aims was to stop the local Liberal party endorsing Catholic candidates.[39] However, despite its exclusive and elitist membership the Thousand appears to have been of only marginal importance.

---

[35]Richardson, Pubs of Old Ancoats, p.11.

[36]MS, tape 87 and Crawley transcript.

[37]Federationist, August 1922.

[38]MG, 21st June 1898, 1st March 1899, 2nd May 1911.

[39]MG, 17th May 1899.

Hostilities were also conducted in the supposedly more sophisticated realm of high theology. During the 1890s Father Bernard Vaughan of the Holy Name rose to prominence by defending the Catholic Church against the wide-ranging criticisms of the Bishop of Manchester. Between April and December 1895 Vaughan held a series of lectures at the Free Trade Hall, intended to reject the Bishop's attacks. These gatherings generated much interest and partisanship. Nevertheless, it was clear that many non-Catholics took Vaughan's side and followed the proceedings more as an entertainment than a life-or-death sectarian struggle. Vaughan won a personal loyalty more in the manner of a celebrity than of a Jesuit priest. When he walked on stage at the start of one such meeting

> It was a moment of supreme enthusiasm. Waving hankerchiefs and hats hoisted upon sticks supplied the want of flags that are distributed at political meetings. During the splendid and spontaneous welcome, which was to be reckoned by minutes, not seconds, of duration, Father Vaughan repeatedly bowed his acknowledgements.[40]

Up to 6,000 people attended each meeting one of which concluded with a good-natured procession down Oxford Road to Vaughan's church.[41]

The Bishop's attacks often seemed to have been motivated by considerations closely related to his opposition to Home Rule. During the period when limited Irish independence seemed imminent both he and the Dean of Manchester rammed home their assault on the

---

[40] Harvest, June 1895.

[41] Martindale, Father Bernard Vaughan, pp.58-7. See MG, 2nd November 1896 for another Vaughan-Bishop controversy.

Catholic Church.[42] In 1912-13 the Bishop chose to concentrate his fire on the Pope's newly codified thoughts on mixed marriage contained in the Ne Temere decree. This was a deliberate attempt to defeat Home Rule by appealing to anti-Catholic sentiment. Echoing the fears of many extreme Protestants he claimed that Home Rule would result in an Ireland "more devoted to the Pope than to its relation with England" and subject Protestants to Catholic persecution.[43] The Bishop talked of "the claims of Rome to interfere between husband and wife, between father and child" and noted that

> wage-earners in Lancashire have been told that though they have been married and are living pure lives, yet they are adulteresses and prostitutes [...] If in England such persecutions occur, what is likely to be the fate of our fellow-Protestants whom we are handing over to Home Rule in Ireland?[44]

Hidden within his diocesan monthly letter and the correspondence columns of the Manchester Guardian such talk produced little in the form of a popular response. During this period relations between the city's Catholic and non-Catholic populations appear to have remained as they had always been. Nevertheless, during the summer of 1910 an Ancoats leafleting campaign advised all Protestants to have nothing to do with Catholics. Apart from a Catholic protest meeting at St.Patrick's this also provoked a paltry response.[45]

---

[42] MG, 11th, 12th October 1911, for the Dean's claim that the Catholic Church considered every act of Protestant worship a sin and the Bishop of Sebastopol's angry rebuttal of "this gross calumny against the Catholics of Lancashire."

[43] MG, 11th May 1912; 3rd February 1913.

[44] MG, 4th July 1913.

[45] MCH, 28th May 1910.

Although Ireland raised the temperature of religious 'debate', unskilled workers were usually more exercised by issues of territory much nearer to home. This took the symbolic form of attacking Church property, particularly in parishes which had not yet been fully established for in such areas the Catholic Church's presence had not - even grudgingly - been accepted. In 1902 an attempt was made to burn down the building which served as temporary chapel in the Sacred Heart parish, Gorton. It was also common for local youths to break the chapel's windows.[46] During the 1920s the parish of St.Malachy's was established in Collyhurst from parts of existing neighbouring parishes. The old blacking factory which acted as a temporary church was firebombed on three occasions, twice when adherents were gathered inside for Mass.[47] The proposed building of a Catholic school in the parish also provoked much opposition. A petition expressing the hostility of, at least some, local residents was sent to the Board of Education. The Manchester Catholic Herald optimistically blamed such action on a minority of "bigots", just as forty years before the Saturday Half Penny complacently thought the age of religious intolerance had passed.[48]

Not all members of the Established Church pursued a policy of religious intolerance or were politically opposed to Home Rule. During the 1920s the priest at St.Alban's and his counterpart at the neighbouring St.James's the Less were on friendly terms. When the Roman Catholic died the bells of St.James's rang as a mark of

---

[46]Bolton, Salford Diocese, p.204.

[47]MCH, 16th February 1924, 14th April 1934.

[48]MCH, 2nd July 1927; Turner, Collyhurst, p.25.

respect.[49] During the height of the post-1918 Irish crisis Canon Peter Green of Greengate attended a meeting which called for the release of the Mayor of Cork. For his pains he was severely reproached by a number of his parishioners.[50] Nevertheless, the overwhelming influence of organised religion was to encourage competitive, if not hostile, feelings between Catholics and non-Catholics. This point is more fully illustrated in the chapter devoted to Whit walks.

4. Occupational rivalry.

In the immediate wake of the Irish influx of the late 1840s conflict between the immigrant and indigenous populations often found its root in the intensive competition for what were often scarce jobs. Such hostilities were, nevertheless, sporadic and given shape and form by the fortunes of certain trades in particular towns at specific times.[51] When the economy took a downturn this type of conflict became more frequent. As Neville Kirk has shown, during the hostilities of the 1860s conflict was most intense in the ecomonically homogeneous small manufacturing towns to the east and south west of Manchester. In towns such as Stalybridge, as the Irish moved into cotton factory employment, they placed themselves in direct competition with English workers.[52] By the 1890s the fall in immigration and the stabilisation of Lancashire's economy largely accounted for the decline in the incidence of such conflicts. In

---

[49] MS, tape 87.

[50] MG, 15th October 1920.

[51] Treble, Place, p.66.

[52] Kirk, Class and Fragmentation, p.339; Kirk, 'Ethnicity', pp.83-6.

Liverpool, however, the dominance of insecure unskilled jobs associated with the docks allied to the large number of Irish immigrants and their descendants kept the level of hostilities high.[53] Nationally, the Liberal party during the 1890s felt it important to refute claims that Home Rule would result in a flood of Irish immigrant workers. Instead, it was stated, by abolishing evictions Home Rule would keep the Irish in Ireland and therefore prevent them 'overstocking' the labour market.[54]

Manchester's more diverse economy meant that this form of conflict was less common than in the rest of the region. The local economy can also be distinguished from that of Liverpool on similar grounds: unskilled casual labour of the sort required by the docks was not found to the same extent. Indeed, in 1892 John Denvir suggested that the Irish in Manchester were in a much better economic position than their Liverpool counterparts because of the greater number of regular factory jobs.[55] Even though north Manchester's economy was especially reliant upon unskilled labour it was also blessed with diversity.[56] Therefore, if conflict between the two groups did occur the implications were limited to those few members of the trade.

---

[53]Gallagher, 'A tale of two cities', pp.110-11.

[54]Liberal leaflet 1516, n.d. (early 1890s?), Irish Question Collection, Misc. 28, London School of Economics.

[55]Denvir, Irish in Britain, p.431. For a comparative breakdown in the occupational structure of Liverpool, Manchester and Salford see Appendix 12.

[56]M.Fitzgerald, 'Ancoats clearance area. Sociological study, May 1937 to March 1938', Misc./847, p.5, MAD.

In spite of Manchester's comparatively less dramatic history of occupational conflict the 'No Irish Need Apply' notice was by no means uncommon.[57] This was an injunction which could even be applied to third generation Irish. One respondent, family name Riley, recalled that during the 1920s her two brothers were denied jobs on a building site simply because they had an Irish-sounding surname.[58] In order to avoid such trouble some Irish descendants went so far as to change their surnames in order to make them sound more 'English': one respondent's brother felt it prudent to drop the 'O' from O'Hanlon.[59] Although there was no systematically applied prejudice at work the Irish were well aware that hostile feelings sometimes damaging their employment prospects . They made note of it in the form of a rhyme popular, during the interwar years.

"No Irish need apply."
Who'er wrote this did write it well,
The same is written on the gates of Hell,
"No Irish need apply."[60]

Into the 1930s a shared Catholic and Protestant paranoia about the distribution of jobs continued. Both sides assumed they were being denied access to jobs by their rival. Prior to 1914 Dan Boyle the Irish Catholic councillor and chairman of the council's tramways committee was accused of employing his fellow countrymen rather than English workers. This was something a few Irish also believed.[61] Suspicions were widespread throughout Lancashire: in the early 1930s

---

[57] Greenwood, There was a Time, p.66; MS, tape 266,

[58] MS, tape 87.

[59] MS, tape 266.

[60] MS, tape 794.

[61] MS, tape 794.

an Irish alderman on Nelson Town Council was accused along similar lines; in St.Helens it was felt that Catholic councillors looked after their own.[62] Probably with more justification, Catholics also believed they were suffering from prejudice at work. In 1932 the Manchester Catholic Herald was particularly exercised by claims that Irish workers at the city's G.P.O. were being denied promotion.[63] Although rumour and accusation were rarely followed by iron-clad proof, suspicions remained.

During periods of high unemployment and times when the Irish crisis spilt over onto the mainland incidents of prejudice at work proliferated. This was more specifically directed against recent Irish immigrants rather than the community as a whole but as already shown it was not restricted to them. It can be no surprise that during the aftermath of the 1916 Dublin Easter Rising Irish harvesters were denied jobs by Lancashire farmers, nor that they fought with English labourers.[64] During the Irish crisis of the early 1920s Irish dockers in Salford were viewed with suspicion. After the assassination of Sir Henry Wilson by Sinn Fein, Irishmen were supposedly made redundant at an increasing rate.[65]

The Irish troubles were superimposed upon a slump in the British economy which continued for most of the 1920s and 1930s during which time large numbers of indigenous unemployed resented any form of immigrant labour, even the few thousand Irish. Handley has noted how

---

[62] MCH, 13th August 1932; Charles Forman, Industrial Town (1979), p.174.

[63] MCH, 7th May 1932.

[64] MCH, 1st July 1916.

[65] MCH, 2nd October 1920, 8th July 1922.

the interwar depression "awakened old discords" in Scotland.[66] In Manchester during the early 1920s the combined effect of local unemployment and the Irish crisis also made one respondent feel that "everybody" was picking on the Irish.[67] A deputation of the unemployed went so far as to demonstrate outside Manchester town hall that contractors building Manchester City's new football ground at Moss Side were using Irish, rather than their own, labour.[68] During the early 1930s the Blackshirts, particularly active in the city, echoed these popular feelings of hostility and presented the Irish as one cause of unemployment.[69]

5. Ireland.

The course of events in Ireland underpinned at least some of the conflict which occurred at work and gave an added immediacy to religious differences. In particular, the battle for Home Rule and full Irish independence punctuated the Irish-English relationship throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, putting it under some considerable strain. This was especially the case during the crisis of 1916-22, a time when English soldiers in Ireland were shooting the Irish whilst in Manchester Irish Nationalists were trying to blow up the English.

---

[66] J.E.Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland (Cork, 1947), p.302.

[67] MS, Crawley transcript.

[68] MCN, 29th July 1922.

[69] MS, tape 745. There was a British Union of Fascists club on Deansgate. In 1933 4,000 attended a party meeting at the Free Trade Hall, DD, 13th, 14th March 1933.

Prior to 1916 Home Rule had been of only sporadic political importance in Britain. Nevertheless, Nationalist politicians in Manchester constantly kept the achievement of Home Rule before their Irish constituents. Moreover, St.Patrick's Day celebrations and the commemoration of the execution of the Manchester Martyrs annually reminded the Irish of their collective grievance. On these occasions England's numerous crimes against the homeland were recalled with the familiarity of a litany and the need for continued political activity was enthusiastically reaffirmed.

The crisis of 1916-22, which concluded in the almost complete independence of most of Ireland, caused a manifold increase in feelings of injustice on the part of the Irish. On the English side anger and revenge became the dominant emotions. The fight for independence was no longer made with speeches in the Commons but with guns and bombs and for this the Irish in Britain were held responsible. Mary McCarthy, the daughter of an Irish father and English mother, recalled how the events of Easter 1916 fundamentally changed her relationship with erstwhile schoolfriends. They were "transformed from familiars and friends into dangerous, sadistic little hooligans." She became "the focal point of the reaction of the English children to the troubles".[70]

During this period Manchester's Irish closely identified with those suffering from English oppression and extreme Protestant force. This was expressed in a number of ways including the familiar form of parades and demonstrations. The most impressive of these was a mock-funeral procession which marked the death by hunger strike of the Mayor of Cork in Clerkenwell prison during October 1920. This

---

[70]McCarthy, Generation, pp.42-3.

huge demonstration of Irish unity wound its way from Stevenson Square, past St.Patrick's church, up Rochdale Road, on to the Catholic cemetery at Moston and culminated in a religious service held near the Manchester Martyrs' memorial. The Catholic Church, Sinn Fein and all other Irish organisations participated. As the Manchester Guardian reported

> The assembly represented all ranks and classes. Men in tall hats and frock coats marched side by side with men in ordinary working clothes, there were equal contrasts in the women's section.

Such a show did not go uncontested and, particularly in Collyhurst, small English gangs waved Union Jacks and sang 'Rule Britannia' along the route. Consequently, the procession was complemented by a series of fights and scuffles in adjacent side streets.[71] A more individual - and bizarre - expression of affiliation practised at this time by "many Irish" in the city was to paint their houses orange, green and white - the colours of the Republican tricolour.[72]

The failure of the constitutional Nationalists led the city's Irish to lend the Sinn Fein-inspired Irish Self-Determination League their support. Even Irish Liberal and Labour representatives were drawn to endorse Irish counter-terror - so long as it remained outside the mainland. During the winter of 1920-21 such violence, in the form of bombs and incendiaries, found its way to Manchester and the surrounding countryside. The city experienced acts of organised Irish terrorism for the first time since the collapse of Fenianism in the 1860s.[73] These acts naturally increased popular antipathy to

---

[71] MG, 1st November 1920.

[72] MCH, 29th January 1921.

[73] Times, 14th, 21st, 22nd February 1921.

the Irish in the city.[74] All Irishmen became suspect even those, like Thomas Broderick, who had lived in Manchester for over twenty years. Broderick's house was raided three times by an over-vigilent police force all to no avail. They found no incriminating evidence - if there had been anything to find.[75] During this period simply acting 'suspiciously' outside a gasworks or a factory was cause enough to arrest an Irishman.[76]

In April 1921 this wave of terror culminated in a shooting incident and the death of a young Irishman during a one hundred-man police raid on an Irish club on Erskine Street, Hulme. At the club the police found guns, petrol and explosives and were able to claim that they had broken the heart of the campaign in Lancashire.[77] During the weekend after the raid feelings among the local English population ran so high that the police thought it prudent to place a guard on the club. This was to forestall an attack by what had become an angry crowd. Members of the mob had already assaulted one woman for allegedly supporting the 'rebels'.[78]

Of the sixteen men found guilty of conspiracy in the subsequent trial most were well-established members of the Manchester Irish population. Amongst their number was a grocer, clerk, plumber and a

---

[74] Times, 26th, 27th November 1920.

[75] MCH, 10th December 1923.

[76] Times, 17th February 1921.

[77] MG, 4th, 5th April 1921; MEN, 4th April 1921; Manchester Watch Committee minutes, 1921, volume 88, item 40, available Greater Manchester Police Museum [hereafter GMPM].

[78] MEN, April 4th 1921.

prominent member of the local Labour party.[79] By no means were all the accused Irish-born. Sean Morgan, shot dead by police during the Hulme raid, had been educated at St.Patrick's school and fought in the War.[80] The family to which two arrested brothers belonged was respected within Ancoats. One of their brothers eventually became a priest.[81] Despite English disapproval the city's Irish did not distance themselves from Sinn Fein's violent methods. Infact, they tended to strongly identify with them. Sean Morgan became yet one more martyr to the cause of Irish freedom; his funeral attracted a large number of sympathisers.[82] Even on the ninth anniversary of his death the crowds still attended the unveiling of a memorial at Moston cemetery.[83] In English popular imagination the memory of the Hulme club raid also lived on. In contrast, however, this emphasised the bravery of those police officers who led the raid.[84]

By the 1930s Ireland was no longer a serious point of conflict in the city. The Irish sense of grievance, if it still existed, was muted. The structure of the IRA's 1939 bombing campaign reveals how distanced Manchester's Irish had become from events in Ireland, even if Ireland was still intent on intruding into their lives. It was, in any event, a botched affair, which resulted in the unintended

---

[79] MG, 9th, 14th July 1921; ASSI, 52/331, PRO.

[80] MCH, 9th April 1921.

[81] MS, tape 794.

[82] MCH, 16th April 1921.

[83] MCH, 26th April 1930.

[84] Evening Chronicle [hereafter EC], 9th September 1933. In this issue it was revealed that the officer in charge did not have a search warrant.

death of one innocent passer-by. More importantly, those active in the bombings were largely strangers to the city: they operated from an empty shop in Chorlton-on-Medlock. This was no vibrant Irish club where, as in 1921, one room contained men hatching bomb plots whilst in another people happily danced and drank. It was, instead, an inglorious, imported conspiracy, with few roots in the city's Irish population. Like Brendan Behan in Liverpool these Manchester Irish bombers had arrived from Ireland only weeks before. It does not appear that the settled Irish much identified with their compatriots: on his arrest in Liverpool Behan felt that within the booing crowd were some of the city's Irish "trying to prove their solidarity with the local stock."[85] One of the few accused in Manchester not of Irish birth actually used as part of his defence the fact that, although the son of Irish parents, he had been raised in Ancoats. He was discharged.[86]

6. Conclusion.

This chapter has sketched out the general cultural position of the Irish in Manchester's working class. It suggested that although Liverpool and Glasgow were extreme cases of sectarianism Manchester, despite many differences, shared - albeit in a weak form - a number of their attributes. Despite the consistent decline of Irish immigration to Manchester hostilities remained. Events in Ireland could still, on occasion, put relations into a much more hostile context. It was during such periods that occupational and religious

---

[85]Brendan Behan, Borstal Boy, (1958), p.13.

[86]This account based on Manchester explosives trial cuttings, catalogue number 430, GMPM; ASSI 52/485, PRO.

rivalries were rekindled. Therefore, in spite of their 'integration' within society there remained times when the Irish and their descendants could not escape the consequences either of their nationality or their religion.

Chapter Six. A Dual Faced Culture.

1. Introduction.

The previous chapter indicated that, despite the relatively subdued and sporadic character of sectarian conflict in the city, Manchester retained a number of characteristics familiar to the historian of Glasgow or Liverpool. This chapter underlines the suggestion that relations between Irish and English were by no means constantly at breaking point. In terms of everyday existence both groups lived fairly peacefully and, particularly in the street, relations reached a particularly amicable point. Nevertheless, there were still areas in an individual's life when differences - primarily of religion, but closely intertwined with those of nationality - asserted themselves. These emerged mainly during the years of education and when marriage was in prospect.

Relations between Irish Catholics and the rest of Manchester's working class were, therefore, complex and variable. North Manchester, and in particular the districts adjacent to St.Patrick's parish, appear to have been the nearest the city came to Liverpool-style frictions. Oral evidence, however, indicates that even this generalisation must be qualified. One Anglican respondent from Trafford Park, a newly industrialised area with much fewer Irish than Collyhurst, recalled of the pre-1914 period that

> with the Catholics [...] the community was so tight, and there was always 'them and us'. And ofcourse they said the same thing - 'them and us'. It was always 'them and us', 'them and us'...[1]

---

[1] MS, tape 780.

In contrast it was a Catholic respondent from Ancoats and a member of St.Patrick's parish who remembered of the same period that, whatever one's religion or nationality, "We were all neighbours."[2]

The failure of the Gaelic League in the city shows that however imperfectly the Irish and their descendants were established in Manchester's working class they still felt little compulsion to participate in a movement which rejected 'English' proletarian culture as a whole.

2. Schools and youth clubs.

Manchester's pre-1914 elementary educational system was largely divided between Catholic and Anglican schools, particularly in areas where the unskilled - and therefore Catholics - predominated. In the city as a whole Catholic elementary schools only accommodated 13 per cent of children in 1905. However, in north Hulme the figure was 26 per cent and in the most Irish part of north Manchester it stood at 48 per cent. The extent of chronic overcrowding in many Catholic schools makes these conservative estimates as official capacity was often exceeded. By the interwar period the Church had increased its grasp, both relatively and absolutely, so that by 1935 20 per cent of all children in Manchester were educated in Catholic schools. The fact that municipal schools, supposedly non-sectarian, had taken over from many Anglican schools by this time was of little significance to Catholics. They were still non-Catholic and, therefore, continued to be seen as rivals.[3]

---

[2]'Sisters' tape, in author's possession.

[3]Appendix 13, Tables 1 and 2.

As in the United States separate denominational education bred sectarian feelings between children.[4] It was no accident that they were the most vocal of name-callers.[5] Schooling was, in short, an experience that united Catholic with Catholic and divided Catholic from Protestant: this pitched the two groups into a literal competition. Sport, for which St.Patrick's scholars significantly wore green jerseys, was the favorite arena of battle.[6] In Trafford Park, Catholic and Anglican football teams enjoyed a particular rivalry.[7] In Ordsall a St.Bartholemew's scholar recalled that every game with St.Joseph's, in whatever sport, was a "needle match".[8] Conflict was not always confined to the field of play and sometimes developed into an inter-school fracas. Frank Doran, who attended St.Patrick's before 1914, recalled such a fight with boys from Abbot Street Board School.

> ...we often clashed with them in winter, fighting with snowballs. We would retreat to our school, then get extra boys and chase them to their school. All the while shouting at them "Ooh Prodidogs". They would chase us back shouting "Ooh Catholics".[9]

Anthony Burgess has also recalled that during the 1920s those attending St.Edmund's school were despised by scholars at the neighbouring Church of England school. Each side had their own

---

[4]For the United States, Thernstrom, Poverty, p.48; Levine, Irish Politicians, pp.82-4.

[5]Roberts, Slum, p.170; 'Sisters' tape.

[6]Doran, Memory Lane, p.8.

[7]MS, tape 780.

[8]MS, tape 469.

[9]Doran, Memory Lane, pp.7-8.

rhyme. The Anglican children would chant

> Cat lick, Cat lick, going to Mass,
> Riding to Hell on the devil's ass,

which was equalled by the Catholics who sang

> Proddy dog, Proddy dog on the wall,
> A small raw spud will feed you all.
> A ha'penny candle will give you light
> To read the Bible of a Saturday night.[10]

A Collyhurst teacher has recalled the regular Saturday morning football matches which were played on Monsall Rec. during the late 1940s and early 1950s.

> The matches between St.Malachy's and St.Pat's, St.Augustine's and Albert Memorial, Burgess St. and Alfred St., Collyhurst Muni. and St.Oswald's were always hard fought. The air was filled with chants and songs of rival supporters.[11]

This seems to indicate that matches were also played between schools of the same religion. There were, in fact, a number of Catholic sports leagues in the city. Nevertheless, such contests would have assumed a different character to those games fought between Catholic and non-Catholic.

If the experience of education was strongly divisive that of youth clubs was much less so. Although the vast majority of Catholics attended their parish school a parish church's meagre resources, for which education had priority, very often could not stretch to the provision of a youth club. Therefore, in this field there was some room for an individual choice which did not exist for schools.

---

[10]Burgess, Little Wilson, pp.28-9.

[11]City of Manchester Cultural Services, I Remember 1952. Silver Jubilee Essay Competition, offprint, 1977, p.2.

The heyday of youth organisations was the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During the 1880s, many of Manchester's middle class became aware of an apparent 'problem' amongst working class youngsters. Both secular and denominational voluntary organisations attempted to ameliorate the effects of what they saw as a disreputable street culture, thought to be encouraging adolescent criminality.[12] The Catholic Church was only reluctantly dragged into this area in the wake of other denominations' endeavor, fearing that by leaving the field clear proselytisers would take advantage. This was a suspicion not entirely without foundation: the main aim of the Heyrod Street Lads' Club was

> to attract to the Sunday School some individuals from that mass of lads in the district who were not attracted to any school or place of worship."[13]

The religious influence continued to be strongly felt within the youth club movement: even as late as the 1930s between two thirds and four fifths of Manchester's youth clubs were attached to a church.[14] However, most of the city's various Catholic churches were unable to fully compete with their religious and philanthropic rivals. The clubs formed during the last two decades of the nineteenth century in 1890s St.Michael's in Angel Meadow were

---

[12]W.G.Jackson, An Historical Study of the Provision of Facilities for Play and Recreation in Manchester, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1940, pp.87-98.

[13]A History of the Heyrod Street Lads' Club, 1889-1910 (Manchester, 1911), p.5.

[14]Joan L.Harley, Report of an Enquiry into the Occupations, Further Education and Leisure Interests of Girl Wage-Earners from Elementary and Central Schools in the Manchester District, with Special Reference to the Influence of School Training on Their Use of Leisure, unpublished M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1937, p.85; Charles F.Carter, 'Youth work in Manchester', Social Welfare, vol.iv, no.6, October 1940, p.108.

exceptional: they were established as a result of the singular generosity of an exceptionally wealthy Catholic, few in number amongst the city's adherents.

Despite all efforts to discourage them, Catholic children attended clubs sponsored by non-Catholics.[15] Hugh Oldham Lads' Club was very popular with many young men living in north Manchester - there were nearly 1,000 paid up members during the winter of 1913-14. Only a few doors down from St.Patrick's church, the club also had many Irish names on its membership lists.[16] Frank Doran, who earlier related the example of an inter-school fight, was one such Catholic member.[17] The Salford Lads' Club was similarly patronised by boys of all denominations.[18] Nevertheless membership of non-Catholic clubs did not necessarily diminish a boy's adherence to his faith. John Tomlinson attended Hugh Oldham's as a boy, but remained firmly within St.Patrick's social orbit.[19]

It is clear that the number of youths active in church, party, or voluntary organisation, club or night school decreased during the interwar period. Hugh Oldham's membership began to decline after 1920.[20] In 1918 41 per cent and in 1940 only 28 per cent of those adolescents surveyed were connected with an institution providing

---

[15] MS, tape 457.

[16] W.A.Richardson, 'The Hugh Oldham Lads' Club', Manchester Review, vol.viii, 1959, p.340, 345.

[17] Doran, Memory Lane, p.11.

[18] MS, tape 49.

[19] Turner, Collyhurst, p.29.

[20] Richardson, 'Hugh Oldhams', p.341.

some type of leisure.[21] This was possibly due to the greater appeal of a more commercialised youth culture during these years.[22] Church-based organisations were more successful in retaining numbers because parochial clubs provided one of the few opportunities for members of the opposite sex to meet.[23] Nevertheless, in 1922 the Catholic Fderationist was bemoaning the small number of parochial lads'clubs in the city.[24] In 1940 it was estimated that barely 10 per cent of Hulme's adolescent population attended clubs provided by religious organisations. During the 1930s St.Wilfrid's parish was almost completely unable to provide facilities for Hulme's young Catholics' leisure time.[25]

---

[21]In 1918 out of 94,000 juveniles 55,000 were not members of voluntary organisations, Jackson, Recreation in Manchester, p.91. In 1940 of the 90,000 young people between the ages offourteen andtwenty five surveyed 65,000 were not members any kind of leisure organisation, Carter, 'Youth work', p.108.

[22]David Fowler, 'The interwar youth consumer in Manchester', paper presented at Manchester History Workshop Day School, 3rd May 1986.

[23]Church clubs were said not to have suffered a fall in membership in those aged 16-17 for this reason, Harley, Report, pp.85-6, 95. It has also been suggested that this was why children attended church, Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth, 1889-1939 (Oxford, 1981), p.133.

[24]CF, May 1922.

[25]F.T.Moore, 'The Hulme youth problem', Social Welfare, vol.iv, no.7, January 1941, pp.124-5; Canonical visitation, December 1932, St.Wilfrid's box, WH.

3. Street and youth culture.

If, after 1918, a decreasing number of adolescents attended clubs then all still had access to the street. It was calculated in 1939 that during the summer months a Hulme working girl in her late teens spent 30 per cent of leisure time socialising in the street. Less tied to domestic duties, working boy's spent 40 per cent of their time there.[26] Children and adolescents mixed in the street despite their social differences. Robert Roberts noted that Ordsall children "had the reprehensible habit of making friends with anyone about their own age who happened to be around."[27] Catholics comprised about one fifth of Ordsall's population and, unlike the Jews, lived side-by-side with the rest of the working class. Contradicting his bold statements about their pariah status exclusion Roberts has noted that the offspring of Irish immigrants grew up in a shared environment with English children. Indeed, one of Roberts's closest friends was Syd Carey whose Irish father was an unskilled labourer. Although the Careys were generally looked down upon as 'low class' Syd was still accepted by the rest of the children. They did not deny him access to their street activities despite recognition of his distinct and inferior status. In a similar manner a boy named Monaghan was a member of a gang in which his English peers referred to him as 'Irish'. These two examples should be compared with that

---

[26]These figures were based on diaries kept during the summer of 1939, H.E.O.James and F.T.Moore, 'Adolescent leisure in a working class district', Occupational Psychology, vol.xiv, no.3, July 1940, pp.139-40.

[27]Roberts, Slum, p.27.

of the English boy Iggy. His father an inmate of Strangeways prison, Iggy was the street's scapegoat and like the rest of the neighbourhood the Careys treated the boy with great contempt.[28]

According to Elizabeth Roberts such street socialisation was "a way of establishing conformity within the peer group, indeed of cementing the bonds of that group. It created a "group solidarity" amongst the children.[29] Irish children were, therefore, participants in this general process. For the purposes of this section emphasis is given to only one of the normative values 'taught' by this form of association, that being the intense loyalty to the street or neighbourhood. Parochial patriotism was one of the commanding features of Manchester's back-streets and seemingly cut across national and religious rivalries.[30] This patriotism reached such a point that one south Manchester grandmother even had a favorite saying that "From Hulme all blessings flow".[31]

Scuttling gangs were the most forceful expression of the way in which youth street culture tapped into these loyalties. They also provide an insight into the status of the Irish within the unskilled working class. 'Scuttling' was a name given to the often violent activities of Manchester's street gangs between the late 1880s and

---

[28]Roberts, Schooling, pp.67-9, 73-5, 87, 140.

[29]Elizabeth Roberts, Working Class Barrow and Lancaster, 1890 to 1930, Centre for North-West Regional Studies, Occasional Papers, Number 2 (University of Lancaster, 1976), p.52; Elizabeth Roberts, 'Living and learning - socialisation outside school', Oral History, vol.iii, no.2, 1975, p.23.

[30]Roberts, Schooling, pp.36-7.

[31]Harry Watkins, From Hulme All Blessings Flow (Swinton, 1985), p.3.

the early 1920s; it was a country-wide urban phenomena.[32] Gangs were composed of unskilled and semi-skilled males in their late teens and early twenties, who lived in the same street or neighbourhood and battled with their counterparts from adjacent districts.[33] Each had their own 'uniform': members of the Napoo gang, for example, were especially fond of red neckerchiefs and buckled belts. This particular gang was composed of the sons of carters, porters and stall hands from Smithfield market and operated in the Oldham Street area during the First World War. Given the area and occupational origins from which the Napoo derived its numbers it was no accident that it was led by a youth named Logan.[34] Many of the city's gangs were, in fact, led by young men with Irish names. In the 1890s there was Jimmy O'Neil in Broughton, Red Shelley in Adelphi, Jerry Hoddy in Greengate and Thomas Calligan, the "king" of Hulme's scuttling fraternity.[35] Most of the members of one particular scuttling gang, arrested after a stabbing in Back Hanover Street in 1897, had Irish surnames: Burgess, Callaghan, Corcoran, Cunningham, Gibson and Martin.[36]

Stephen Humphries has suggested that gang fights were most intense when racial differences were superimposed upon parochial loyalties. Consequently, prior to the early 1920s Jews, and not the

---

[32]Blanch, 'Nationalism and organised youth', pp.104-5.

[33]Humphries, Hooligans, pp.187-9. For an example of an Ancoats scuttling gang fight, MG, 28th June, 1892.

[34]MS, tapes 486 and 115; Burke, Ancoats Lad, p.15.

[35]Humphries, Hooligans, p.188, 200; MG, 24th June, 1892.

[36]MG, 22nd January 1897.

Irish, were the most common subjects of attacks from street gangs.[37] Both Irish and English shared prevalent anti-semitic feelings. Robert Roberts recalled that Mick Carey, Syd's Irish father, a leader of Ordsall's Cope Street gang during the 1890s exhibited such prejudices.

> 'We stopped them bloody Yids" moving into the district' he once reminisced. "'Once them "noses" get into a neighbourhood, they take it over. Then the place is no class at all!'[38]

The Napoo gang continued this tradition. During the battle of the Somme, and annually for two or three years after, they fought the Jewish boys of Cheetham Hill who they apparently blamed for the 1914-18 War because of their German-sounding names.[39] After 1918 the Napoo were also active in a crusade to 'protect' Christian girls (who they also assaulted) from the clutches of Jewish boys.[40] Humphries has suggested that such activity declined in Manchester after the Great War as Jews became more dispersed and lived amongst the wider population.[41] If not that, then it was certainly less well reported.

The street was also the arena for contact and cooperation between Irish and English married women. Due to poverty working class women tended to pool their resources and helped each other

---

[37]Humphries, Hooligans, pp.190-3.

[38]Roberts, Schooling, p.93. John Connor and Joseph Dwyer were accused of stabbing Mr.Kepkevitch, a "foreigner" of Red Bank, and assaulting his wife in what appears to have been an assault motivated by anti-semitism. MG, 1st Janaury 1906.

[39]Maurice Levine, Cheetham to Cordova (Swinton, 1984), p.6.

[40]MS, tape 115.

[41]Humphries, Hooligans, pp.197-8.

during times of crisis, such as childbirth.[42] Inevitably, there would have been a variability in reactions and attitudes, depending on the inclination of individuals involved. One Irish-born woman, who settled in Hulme after 1918, declared that she never mixed with her English neighbours.[43] She was probably exceptional, and it is unlikely that this reluctance to socialise would have been inherited by her Manchester-born offspring. Perhaps a more typical example, and certainly one rich in ambiguity, was that recalled by an Ordsall-born woman of two Irish-born women living in her street during the 1920s. This shows that, despite misgivings about certain of their habits, these women were integrated - albeit at an arms length - into the female street network.

> Maggie Brereton and Bessie Yates, they were never invited [to pay respects to a dead neighbour], never especially. They weren't allowed in anybody's house in fact. They were tolerated in our street. They were always drunk, rowing and they'd rather drink rather than spend money on the children. Or they'd rather send to Mother Theresa's statue; the widow's mite they called it [...] They weren't outcasts because if they really needed help both Maria, Sarah Jane Wilkes and me mother would have gone in to them [the respondent had earlier given an example of how the street helped them out when they were pregnant]. Immediately they came out of the house, me mother would have gone and stood in the back kitchen, stripped herself off, washed herself clean, put clean clothes on and the other clothes would have gone straight into the sink, into disinfectant, because they were dirty [with lice]."[44]

---

[42]Ellen Ross, 'Motherhood in London, 1880-1914', paper presented at University of Birmingham Social History Seminar, 20th March 1985.

[43]MS, tape 266.

[44]MS, tapes 484, 558.

It is difficult to cleanly disentangle the various factors which contributed to the lowly social status of these Irish women: poverty rather than nationality seems to have been dominant. However, it is interesting to note that their donations to the Church were highlighted as one cause of at least some of their difficulties.

Therefore, the pattern of Irish residence, which can be described as concentrated but not ghettoized, helped to structure their relations with the rest of the unskilled working class. In the street, if only there, the Irish and Catholics were integrated, although even there they did not lose their distinct identity.[45]

4. Marriage and the family.

Although they mixed easily enough in the street it seems clear that Irish Catholics more often than not married within bounds set by nationality and religion. This is in apparent conflict with the implications of what was a largely non-sectarian street association, which suggestively pointed towards the formation of a population in which differences were accepted fairly amicably. It is even more surprising when it is realised that the structure of the Irish Catholic family was in many ways similar to that of the English Protestant.

In terms of size, structure and composition the immigrant Irish

---

[45]This was possibly not the case in Jarrow or St.Helens where, on St.Patrick's Day before 1914, Irish Catholic boys regularly fought with non-Catholic gangs, Humphries, Hooligans, pp.189-90, Forman, Industrial Town, p.72.

household had quickly taken on the English form. As early as 1871

> the differences of housing standards between Irish and non-Irish [had] diminished to such a degree that the Irish were virtually indistinguishable from the poorer members of the English working class...[46]

During the interwar period, however, differences in family size probably reasserted themselves. Although in general the birth-rate declined after the 1918 the fall in the Catholic rate was less marked than that for non-Catholics.[47] This appears to have been due more to the increased utilisation of older methods of birth control, such as withdrawl, rather than those advocated by Marie Stopes.[48] Therefore, the Catholic Church's propaganda against such innovative means probably only underscored what was a widely accepted working class practice. During this period the unskilled, whether Catholic or not, almost universally continued to see the use of the sheath as improper.[49] Some Catholic contemporaries mistakenly thought the Catholic birth-rate to be rising as the non-Catholic rate fell. One Haslingden priest even felt that their birth-rate was "50 per cent greater" than the non-Catholic and saw this as a means by which England would once again become a Catholic country. Quite simply, some priests hoped, Catholics would out-produce Anglicans.[50] However,

---

[46]John Haslett and W.J.Lowe, 'Household structure and overcrowding among the Lancashire Irish 1851-1871', Histoire Sociale, vol.x, no.19, 1977, p.58. Also see Walter, Bolton, p.381.

[47]For the decline in the Catholic birth-rate, Royal Commission on Population, 1949, p.29, cited in Diana Gittins, Fair Sex. Family Size and Structure, 1900-39 (1982), p.100.

[48]For Stopes' career, Ruth Hall, Marie Stope. A Biography (1977).

[49]Elizabeth Roberts, A Woman's Place. An Oral History of Working Class Women, 1890-1940 (Oxford, 1984), pp.86-8, 100; Lewis, Women in England, pp.15-16, 19-20.

[50]MCH, 8th July 1916.

such expectations were never realised. The 1949 Royal Commission on Population discovered that although Catholics were somewhat less likely to use artificial methods they extensively used withdrawl and the 'safe period'. Surveys conducted in the 1960s showed that this Catholic prejudice against more modern methods continued well beyond 1945. Church pressure must have accounted for this reluctance. Perhaps their greater reliance on more hazardous methods of birth control explains why Catholics had recourse to abortion almost as much as non-Catholics.[51]

The most important family characteristic shared by both Catholic and Protestant families was the crucial influence it held over the shape of social life and the formation of identity. Here can be seen how the family acted as a divisive force within the working class. The family helped maintain distinctive national consciousness amongst the second and third generation Irish. One respondent born in 1899 was made intimately aware of her Irish grandparents' misfortunes, allegedly at the hands of English soldiers.[52] Bart Kennedy suggested that his Irish mother's desire was to see her son brought up as an Irishman.

> In time he would grow up and become a fine, big Irishman. He was born in England, but that would never make him an Englishman! She wanted him always to remain an Irishman.[53]

Similarly Joe Toole was only half-joking when he suggested that

---

[51]Michael P.Hornsby-Smith, Roman Catholics in England. Studies in Social Structure Since the Second World War (Cambridge, 1987), pp.111-12.

[52]MS, tape 85.1.

[53]Kennedy, Depths, pp.60-1.

> Love of Ireland is, ofcourse, natural to me; but apart from that, my Irish grandparents insisted upon it.[54]

Home life was the cosy centre of a closed society and remained prohibited territory to the outside world - even close friends were not allowed beyond the front door.[55] In some Irish households non-Catholics were especially unwelcome.[56]

These socially conservative influences were felt even by those who attempted to reject them, especially when it came to religion. One respondent kept up the pretence of attending Sunday Mass so as not to upset his mother. Until exposed by a priest, he went for walks in order to give the impression of his continued devotion.[57] More tragically, as he approached the end of his life Tom Barclay still felt a deep regret for the distress caused to his mother by his rejection of Catholicism.[58]

The family's influence upon social conduct came into its own when an offspring was of an age to choose his or her marriage partner. This was strengthened by the activities and declarations of the parish priest who frowned upon mixed marriages. It is probably impossible to be precise about the extent of interdenominational marriages in this period. Even though research in this field is more advanced in the United States than in this country even there the lack of statistics is a frequent cause for complaint. What this American work reveals, however, is that marriage within a

---

[54]Toole, Fighting, p.160.

[55]Michael Young and Peter Wilmott, Family and Kinship in East London (1983), p.104-8, 113-14.

[56]MS, tape 87; Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p36.

[57]MS, tape 457.

[58]Tom Barclay, Memoirs and Medleys (1934), p.121.

denominational group was far more common than marriage outside it. As late as 1957, for example, 77 per cent of all marriages involving Catholics were endogemous.[59] The frequency of marriages made exclusively within the faith appear to have increased in areas where working class Catholics were concentrated in large numbers and also comprised a national as well as a religious minority.[60] All three of these criteria applied to most Catholics in Manchester.

In the first instance the Irish-born tended to marry other Irish-born. In the United States nationality was a very strong influence upon the choice of marriage partner, at least for the first generation.[61] In 1923 73 per cent of Irish-born men were married to Irish-born women, whilst of the 27 per cent who did not choose such wives two thirds were married to those born of Irish parents.[62] In Manchester this tendency was probably even stronger. It was by no means unusual for female domestic servants to return to their home village to marry and the city's Irish clubs served as places for prospective partners to meet.[63]

Elizabeth Roberts has down-played the powerful influence exerted by religion on the choice of marriage partner. She has instead emphasised the religious tolerance of Catholics and Protestants

---

[59]Thomas P.Monaghan, 'The extent of interdenominational marriage in the United States', Journal For The Scientific Study of Religion, vol.x, Summer, 1971, p.88.

[60]John L.Thomas, 'The factor of religion in the selection of marriage mates', American Sociological Review, vol.xvi, no.4, 1951, pp.489-90.

[61]Harold J.Abrahamson, Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America (1973), pp.49-68.

[62]Thernstrom, Encyclopedia, p.532.

[63]MS, tapes 271, 273 and Crawley transcript.

living in Barrow, Lancaster and Preston. According to her when a mixed marriage occurred it was "fairly rare" for families to raise difficulties. Keeping out of 'trouble' (i.e. not getting pregnant) exercised more concern than marrying out of one's parents' faith.[64] Basing his comments upon oral evidence derived from a similar area, Derek Thompson has questioned Roberts's conclusion by suggesting that in Preston during the interwar years "only exceptional couples married outside their religious groups." Accordingly, both sides of the sectarian divide were inhibited by a combination of 'formal' Catholic and 'informal' Protestant sanctions.[65] Historians of the Irish are also divided as to whether mixed marriages increased in the late nineteenth century. The balance, however, seems to favour the opinion that it probably did not.[66] This finding dovetails with Robert Roberts's statement that even a slum Protestant marrying an Irish Catholic "suffered a severe loss of face." Therefore such unions seldom occurred.[67] Lower middle class Protestants were also loathe to have their offspring marry into a Catholic family.[68] Nor was the pressure on Protestants simply 'informal', i.e. exerted outside church. In 1913 the Anglican Bishop of Burnley emphatically warned against the dangers of mixed marriage as did his colleague the Bishop of Blackburn in 1935.[69]

---

[64]Roberts, Woman's Place, pp.73-4.

[65]Derek Thompson, 'Courtship and marriage in Preston between the wars', Oral History, vol.iii, no.2, 1975, p.41.

[66]O'Tuathaigh, 'Irish in the nineteenth century', pp.25-6.

[67]Roberts, Slum, pp.22-3.

[68]Barbara Vaughan, Growing Up in Salford, 1919-1928 (Swinton, 1983), pp.3-5.

[69]MG, 2nd June 1913; MCH, 16th February 1935.

Oral evidence from Manchester also contradicts Elizabeth Roberts's case. The commanding impression is one of a popular hostility to mixed marriage which extended well beyond the pulpit. Councillor Tom Fox, Catholic leader of the Labour party on Manchester City Council, talked in 1916 of the "evil of mixed marriage".[70] Such antipathy was very probably a function of the rarity of such unions - two Catholic sisters, of marrying age just after the First World War, couldn't recall any of their friends marrying Protestants.[71] Another respondent dryly recalled that if she had taken a non-Catholic boy home - a virtual declaration of intent to marry - "he wouldn't have been made terribly welcome."[72] Only one contemporary survey touched on this question. This was a 1927 census of households in St.George's parish, Hulme which discovered that 5 per cent of households (a total of twenty) were 'mixed'. This was an impressively low figure for an area where 56 per cent of the people were Anglican and 36 per cent were Catholic.[73]

When a Protestant married a Catholic both husband and wife ran an equal risk of being permanently alienated from the rest of their family.[74] Despite the fact that in one particular pre-1914 mixed marriage the parents compromised and christened their children Catholic but sent them to a Church of England school the Anglican grandparents refused to visit.[75] If a complete rupture of relations

---

[70] MCH, 5th August 1916.

[71] 'Sisters' tape.

[72] MS, tape 823(1); Roberts, Place, p.72.

[73] See Appendix 3, Table 4.

[74] MS, tapes 165(1) and 469.

[75] MS, tape 469.

was avoided, an unpleasantly long amount of time often had to elapse before the extended family fully accepted the situation. Even after reconciliation, a mixed marriage could leave an abiding scar on relationships.[76] In pre-1914 Oswaldtwistle Mary McCarthy's mother was temporarily disowned by her Methodist father, a Liberal, when she declared her intention to marry a second generation Irishman who was also a staunch Liberal. He had even wished her dead rather than marry a Catholic. After the ceremony they were eventually reconciled but family, friends and neighbours continued to treat her like a deserter.[77]

By no means all of those born into the Irish Catholic milieu married within it. Youth street culture provided the means for members of the opposite sex to become familiar with one another irrespective of origin. Salford's 'Monkey Run' was merely one outlet which, despite parental disapproval, was a popular means of 'going steady'.[78] The further the generations were from Ireland and the more distant a family was from the Church the more likely the offspring married without regard to religion or nationality. The Catholic Mary Bertenshaw married a Protestant whilst pregnant with his child. Her parents had been very infrequent attenders at church whilst she had stopped attending at the age of thirteen. More significantly, Bertenshaw had made few friends at her parish school and most of her childhood friends were non-Catholic. It was from the ranks of these street acqaintances that she chose her future husband.[79]

---

[76] MS, tape 87.

[77] McCarthy, Generation, p.4, 13, 22-3, 26.

[78] MS, tape 556.

[79] Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.113.

5. The failure of Gaelic culture.

Whereas the Irish held an often complicated position within Manchester's working class they were, nevertheless, firmly established within it and had been since the middle of the nineteenth century. Many of their attentions and energies were directed towards the everyday struggle for survival within the city. This fact goes a long way to explain the failure to establish a Gaelic culture. It did not seem relevant to Irish working class life. Nor did it take a form which was best suited to appeal to manual labourers and their wives whose academic achievement stopped abruptly - if it had ever started - when they left school.

The Gaelic League and Gaelic Athletic Association were both established in Manchester in early 1900, some five years after they had been founded in London.[80] In Ireland the movement was associated with a detestation of all things English and many of its activists were also members of Sinn Fein.[81] The League's sympathies were, therefore, not those of the English Catholic hierarchy nor those of the local Nationalist bosses. The movement's energies were concentrated in the realm of language and sport, where it was hoped to establish a 'pure' national culture amongst Manchester's Irish. Despite winning the support of some priests and a number of lay activists it was, except for a short time after 1916, never much more than a small and self-consciously sectarian movement. Lynn

---

[80]Lees, Exiles, p.234.

[81]F.S.L.Lyons, Ireland Since the Famine (1981), pp.226-9.

Lees's description of "an outpouring of Irish energy" into London's pre-1914 Irish cultural revival seems, therefore, rather inappropriate for Manchester.[82]

The use of the Irish language was encouraged by a number of priests and parochial organisations. Mount Carmel, Ordsall provided lessons in Irish history and language for those of all ages whilst both St.Anne's and St.Wilfrid's held continuation classes in Gaelic in 1905-6.[83] The latter church also held a Gaelic service for St.Patrick's Day in 1906.[84] These were individual initiatives, however, and were by no means part of a wider diocesan policy. However, they do contradict Lees' rather sweeping statement that the Catholic Church saw no reason to maintain the language. Her concern to show the Church as preoccupied with 'urbanising' and 'modernising' their Irish adherents has obscured some of its internal contradictions. Although the English hierarchy felt no compulsion to support the teaching of Gaelic, many of its Irish priests and laity did.[85] In 1906 one priest from St.Wilfrid's talked of the "necessity of the Gaelic League".[86] In 1919 a number of clerics had weekly meetings to help improve their own Gaelic.[87] In the same year a St.Patrick's priest also refereed a hurling match between teams from Liverpool and Manchester.[88] Even the Michael

---

[82]Lees, Exiles, p.234.

[83]MCH, 23rd February, 5th October 1906.

[84]MCH, 23rd March 1906.

[85]Lees, Exiles, pp.189-90.

[86]MCH, 9th Febraury 1906.

[87]MCH, 4th October 1919.

[88]MCH, 9th August 1919.

Davitt branch of the United Irish League (UIL), a movement largely philistine about such matters, held Gaelic classes in 1904. It appears to have been the only branch ever to do so.[89] Nevertheless, the Manchester Catholic Herald strenuously endorsed such attempts when they occurred.[90] It suggested that there were "thousands" of Irish people who could still speak something which at least passed for Gaelic, although they were illiterate in that language. In 1907 Hulme was said to contain at least 400 young men in such a position.[91] Even as late as the 1930s the 'Shamrock' pub in Ancoats often reverberated to the sound of Gaelic speakers attempting to keep their words secret from English ears.[92] Outside the Gaelic League, therefore, provision was available for those who desired to learn. There would appear to have been few impediments to the wider use of Gaelic amongst those Manchester Irish already familiar, at least orally, with the language.

The attempt to revive the Gaelic language, however, sparked little interest. Church continuation classes were not popular, whether they provided lessons in Gaelic or any other subject.[93] A working class aversion for things academic very probably proved a drawback here. The St.Anne's class enrolled only one student, whilst the St.Wilfrid's course was discontinued after only a year due to

---

[89] MCH, 11th March 1904.

[90] MCH, 6th July 1900.

[91] MCH, 21st September 1900, 5th October 1907.

[92] Richardson, Pubs of Old Ancoats, p.11.

[93] Harvest, January 1901.

lack of numbers.[94] Even the Gaelic St.Patrick's Day service was poorly attended.[95] Hurling and Gaelic football similarly found little support amongst the Irish and there were probably never more than two clubs in the city.[96] The five branches of the League formed in the Manchester district by 1904 were described as "feeble".[97] Quite obviously there was no desire to revive a lost language in an alien city amongst all but a tiny minority of Irish people.

Popular apathy caused the movement to turn in upon itself. Irish people in the city were seen as corrupted by English ways and activists severely criticised them for their inactivity.[98] The Oisin Gaelic League branch of Gaythorne, Hulme increasingly turned its back on those who would not learn. In late 1906 it resolved that those who could not pass an exam in Gaelic would not be allowed to administer the branch and six months later it decided to implement a test even for those who simply wanted to join.[99] In a similar vein the English Catholic Church was blamed for hurling's desperate failure to become popular amongst Irish people in the city. James Barrett, president of both the Fianna Oge hurling club and the Ancoats branch of Sinn Fein saw the Church's advocacy of 'English' sports, such as football and cricket, as closely connected to its political support for the British Empire. He defiantly declared that

---

[94] MCH, 5th October 1906.

[95] MCH, 23rd March 1906.

[96] MCH, 16th July 1910, 30th August 1919.

[97] MCH, 29th January 1904.

[98] MCH, 5th February 1904.

[99] MCH, 1st January, 3rd May 1907.

> No matter what position our grand old game may be in, we don't want it contaminated by a mixture of West Britonism. We have a County Board capable to look after its interests, and I think we can afford to leave the degenerate Sons of Erin to support ping-pong.[100]

In the early 1920s the cinema was also attacked as it was thought that "Habitual picture-goers would not remain really Irish."[101]

Therefore, despite popular attachment to Ireland, mass support for Nationalism and a significant acquaintance with spoken Gaelic the Manchester Irish remained unwilling to help recreate Gaelic culture. The Manchester Catholic Herald noted

> a certain partly annoying indifference to Gaelic League ideals [...] manifested by men and women who would deafen [one] with their boast of their nationality.[102]

One correspondent complained that not one member of his own UIL branch attended the Gaelic League branch of which he was secretary.[103] Many active UIL Nationalists found little charm in the movement closely associated as it was with their political rivals, Sinn Fein. After 1916, however, Sinn Fein gained more support amongst the Irish in Manchester. Through the formation of the Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL), which supplanted the constitutional Nationalists, the city's dominant Irish political movement was led by those more sympathetic to cultural endeavor. ISDL branches actively promoted both Gaelic language and sport. One Salford branch not only taught the language but also had its own Gaelic football team.[104] However,

---

[100] MCH, 26th April 1907, 13th August, 15th October 1910.

[101] MCH, 11th June 1921.

[102] MCH, 29th April 1904.

[103] MCH, 26th February 1904.

[104] MCH, 7th, 14th May 1921.

when the police burst into the Erskine Street Sinn Fein club in Hulme on a fateful Saturday night in 1921, they found most of the members playing that not especially Irish game of whist.[105]

The radicalisation of Irish politics, between 1916-21, was not converted into a permanently increased popular interest in things Gaelic. By the 1930s those interested in Gaelic language and sport were still a small but very enthusiastic minority, existing only on the fringes of Irish life. In 1932 the League had but one "small but healthy" branch for the whole of Manchester.[106] Hurling and Gaelic football continued to be played, but newer clubs emerged mainly in the middle class suburbs of Sale and Altrincham, which lay well to the south of the city, beyond even Stretford.[107] This was probably the case across Britain, for despite Lees's description of the London Gaelic League as vital, it appears to have been been a mainly literary and middle class, rather than a truly popular, movement.[108] Certainly, neither the Gaelic Athletic Association nor even the Gaelic League enjoyed the type of success achieved in Ireland.[109] The secularist and socialist Tom Barclay recalled that League members in his London branch of the 1890s were mainly derived from menial white collar occupations and considered Quixotic by Irish outsiders. When he later established a branch in Leicester he found a disappointing lack of interest in Gaelic.[110] The resurrection of Gaelic culture

---

105 MG, 5th April 1921.

106 MCH, 16th January 1932.

107 MCH, 5th September 1931, 8th September 1934.

108 Lees, Exiles, pp.234-5.

109 Mandle, Gaelic Athletic Association, p.221.

110 Barclay, Memoirs, pp.95-6, 101.

appealed, not to the working class Irish, but to, at best, the lower middle class. It also gave comfort to the disaffected and alienated, those who felt moved to describe Manchester as

> this woe-begone town to which destiny has chained me - temporarily at least.[111]

Quite obviously not enough of the working class Irish shared this acute sense of alienation and those who did failed to express it by learning Gaelic.

6. Conclusion.

It has been shown that the everyday position of Irish Catholics exhibited two distinct and divergent tendencies. In the school and family pressures were exerted that tended to emphasise differences of nationality and religion. It was no accident that the former was directly controlled by the Catholic Church and the latter was under no small measure of its influence. The Church in England, as in the United States, was an impediment to integration.[112] The street provided a point of almost unmediated contact between the two groups but distinct identities were retained even there. This finds an echo in the experience of Irish Catholics in the labour movement. However complex their position within the Manchester working class the Irish did not desire a decisive break with it, something advocated by the Gaelic League. The Irish in Manchester were neither fully 'Irish' nor completely 'Mancunian', but were caught between the two poles of identity.

---

[111] MCH, 26th February 1904.

[112] For the United States, Levine, Irish Politicians, pp.73-4.

Chapter Seven. Manchester Politics, 1890-1939.

1. Introduction.

The years immediately before and after the First World War contain what many historians consider to be an important point of cleavage between the time when politics was given shape by religious influences and the following period when political allegiance was structured by loyalties of class.[1] The purpose of this chapter is to provide a context for the following four chapters which deal with aspects of Irish and Catholic politics. This is because the full meaning of their political activity and responses can only be gauged with reference to the politics of the working class as a whole.

This chapter establishes that the course and structure of unskilled working class politics was strongly shaped by national and religious rivalries throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries until the middle of the 1920s at the very least. Within this milieu, mainly located in Ancoats, Hulme and Ordsall, politics was less to do with issues and debates than with social affiliations reinforced by extensive public display and noisy demonstrations. In these parts of the city political parties largely reflected such differences. Here the Liberals and later Labour represented Irish Catholics whereas the Conservatives took the part of English Protestants. In contrast, it was amongst the unionised, skilled and industrialised working class of the city's north-east

---

[1] K.D.Wald, Crosses on the Ballots (Princeton, 1983); Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics (1980); P.F.Clarke, Lancashire and the New Liberalism (Cambridge, 1971).

that politics was much more to do with the achievement of an economic self-interest defined by the trade union movement and expressed by Labour voting.

2. The nature of political allegiances.

The presence of large numbers of Irish in Lancashire had profound consequences for the county's politics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Henry Pelling has suggested that the region's *notorious pre-1914 working class Conservatism* can be explained with sole reference to it. He has stated that

> religious divisions within the working class [...] were the reflection of a hostility between the immigrant and the indigenous. The greater the proportion of Irish immigrants, the larger the tendency in the working class to vote Conservative.[2]

Even historians keen to point to the transformation of Lancashire's politics from a religious to a class basis concede that prior to 1914 those working class divisions which contained a large number of Irish Catholics continued to exhibit a pronounced preference for Conservatism.[3]

In those parts of Manchester where the Irish were most concentrated they also had a considerable impact upon politics. Before 1914, in spite of a franchise heavily biased against the poor, they constituted a significant part of the electorate in three

---

[2]Henry Pelling, The Social Geography of British Elections, 1885-1910 (1967), p.284.

[3]Clarke, New Liberalism, pp.6-9, 10-11, 18.

of Manchester's six divisions.[4] In the North, North-east and South-west the Irish amounted to something in excess of 10 per cent of the electorate.[5] In 1891 the two former divisions were said to have had the largest Irish vote outside of Liverpool's Scotland division, which was the only mainland constituency to return a Nationalist M.P.[6] The Irish particularly dominated the neighbouring municipal wards of St.Michael's in the North division and New Cross in the North-east. These respectively sat at the bottom of Rochdale and Oldham Roads. Between 1894 and 1903 St.Michael's returned a Liberal candidate seven out of ten times, whereas the two member New Cross ward voted for fifteen Liberals out of a possible twenty, a record rivalled by only one other ward, that being middle class All Saints in the South division. In contrast, the working class wards of Ardwick, Miles Platting, Newton Heath and St.George's, Hulme were four of the six districts to return a Conservative seven times during this period. After the War the Irish vote was no longer estimated in the press. However, calculations based on Catholic parochial population estimates suggest that St.Michael's, still popularly known as "the Irish ward" as late as 1928, had the largest proportion of Catholic voters in the city, being in the region of one half to two thirds.[7]

---

[4]The effect of the pre-1918 franchise on the strength of the Irish vote in Glasgow is discussed in J.F.McCaffrey, 'The Irish vote in Glasgow in the later nineteenth century', Innes Review, vol.xxi, part 1 (1970).

[5]This conclusion is based upon numerous estimates found in various local newspapers and is confirmed in Clarke, New Liberalism, Appendix C.

[6]MCN, 26th September 1891.

[7]MG, 2nd November 1928.

Especially before the end of the century, outside the redoubts of concentrated Irish residence an Irish Catholic candidate was placed at a disadvantage. This was due to the prejudices of non-Irish, non-Catholic electors. In 1893 when Patrick Connor, secretary of the Manchester Gasworkers' Union, stood in Harpurhey for the Independent Labour Party he was confronted by numerous objections about his religion and nationality. These forced him to promise that

> He would not go to the City council as an Irishman or a Roman Catholic, but with a firm resolve honestly to do his duty for the workers who sent him there to look after their interests.[8]

In spite of this disclaimer religious feeling was said to have played a large part in Connor's defeat.[9] During the 1890s Catholic candidates in other wards were similarly called upon to deny that their religion would affect their judgement.[10]

Nevertheless, it was only when Home Rule hung over the political horizon that religious prejudice was most powerfully expressed. On these occasions the Conservative party was only too willing to juxtapose popular parochial antipathy for the Irish with their putative disruption of the national state.[11] Home Rule was not only presented as a danger to the economy and a threat to national security but also as placing fellow Protestants at the mercy of

---

[8] MG, 18th September 1893.

[9] Arthur Woolerton, The Labour Movement in Manchester and Salford (Manchester, 1907), p.20.

[10] For example, Patrick Mooney in St.George's, MG, 30th October 1894; Mark Grimshaw in New Cross, MG, 1st November 1899.

[11] See Jeffrey Hill, 'Manchester and Salford politics in the early development of the Independent Labour Party', International Review of Social History, vol.xxvi, 1981, p.175; for further background, R.L.Greenhall, 'Popular Conservatism in Salford, 1868-86', Northern History, vol.ix, 1974.

Catholic bigots.[12] Nationalist policy was painted as the demand, not for simple devolution of power to Ireland, but for complete independence.[13] In this mode Abraham Williamson, who led the Conservative Labour Party before 1914, described local Nationalists as preaching "what seemed to us poor natives to be treason and strife."[14]

The need to maintain the union with Ireland was perhaps the single most important means of mobilising the Conservative vote before 1914.[15] Home Rule was also extremely unpopular amongst the English and consequently Conservatives were not shy about attacking the Liberals for supporting it. Throughout his 1900 election campaign Arthur Balfour, standing for East Manchester, was so confident of the policy's unpopularity that he dismissively described the Liberals as the "Home Rule Party".[16] The Irish presence and their advocacy of Home Rule gave an added immediacy to the development of Tory patriotism: the enemy within was quite often only next door.[17] It gave the English an added sense of their own superiority, something Conservatives were only too willing to

---

[12] MG, 25th, 30th June 1892, 26th August 1900.

[13] Unionist pamphlet, N.U.551, 1906, M137/8/2/8, MAD.

[14] Salford City Reporter [hereafter SCR], 18th February 1955.

[15] Nicholas Mansergh, 'The Unionist party and the Union 1886-1916', in O.Dudley Edwards and Fergus Pyle (eds.), 1916. The Easter Rising (1968), pp.79-80.

[16] MG, 21st September 1900.

[17] Hugh Cunningham is therefore quite wrong, at least for Lancashire, in suggesting that patriotism was irrelevant to everyday working class life, 'The language of Imperialism, 1750-1914', History Workshop Journal, no.12, 1981, p.26.

underline. Just as the mission of the Liberals, Labour and Nationalists was to show that Home Rule and domestic social reform were complementary so the Conservative task was to demonstrate they were mutually exclusive. In 1892 Balfour stated that

> if we have to chose between injustice to Englishmen and Scotchmen and injustice to Irishmen, I, for my part, am prepared to go for injustice for Ireland as the least of two evils. - (Cheers)[18]

Even during municipal contests the Irish were attacked. In 1906 the Conservative candidate for New Cross, during a meeting badly disrupted by Irish members of the audience, declared that

> It is a *disgrace to have Irishmen coming into your own town and* filling your berths - (Laughter and continued disorder.) If I thought I was going in on an Irish vote I would not go. I am an Englishman, an Imperialist, and a Conservative; we try to do our best for you but you wont have it. - (Cheers and groans) Will you submit in your own town to this hooliganism and rotten system?[19]

This was, nevertheless, mainly a purely political animosity derived from Conservative opposition to Home Rule. So far as the party was concerned it was not based upon religious or national prejudice. When it was politically opportune Conservatives modified their rhetoric. For example, when Home Rule was at issue Conservatives keenly complained about the influence held by the Catholic Church over the Irish. James Ferguson, the sitting Conservative M.P. for North-east Manchester, asserted in 1892 that at election times such voters were "marshalled and controlled by the Catholic priests".[20] However, once it became clear that Catholics, English along with Irish, could be persuaded to vote Conservative because of the

---

[18] MG, 28th June 1892.

[19] MG, 1st November 1906.

[20] MG, 1st July 1892.

party's support for denominational education candidates became less enthusiastic in their criticisms. This policy often succeeded: during the period 1904-13 both St.Michael's and New Cross were transformed from the city's most Liberal wards into some of the most Conservative. They were not unique in this: most wards swung away from the Liberals as a consequence of the government's unpopular Education Bills. St.Michael's elected a Conservative six times in ten years whereas New Cross returned twelve Conservatives out of a possible twenty. Yet, so long as Home Rule was at issue, as in 1910, anti-Catholicism remained a potential weapon in the Conservative armoury. Ireland also ensured that municipal support for the Conservatives was but a temporary and tactical move. Those Irish who voted Conservative did so more to punish the Liberals than to express their support for the enemies of Home Rule.

3. Popular politics.

Given the importance of Home Rule and the way in which religion was used in an overtly political manner pre-War elections only served to underline and emphasise religious and national differences between the Irish and English of Manchester. Whilst the Irish were socially distinct in a number of ways, their political organisation and interests often placed them at a further remove from, if not in direct conflict with, their non-Irish neighbours. This was in part increased by the way the sturm und drang of election campaigns remobilised passions on both sides. Although only a minority of the city's adult male working class could vote before 1918 indirect

participation gave the disenfranchised a very loud voice.[21] Poverty was no impediment to playing at least a minor part in electing a representative, whether for Parliament or Council. Before 1914 the city's slum districts were well-known for the lively, rowdy and often violent conduct of elections.[22] Even after the 1918 working class wards featured not only the best turn-outs but also the most engaged voters.[23]

Political allegiance was no private matter, for display was an important feature of any campaign. Walls were covered in the red print of Liberals, the yellow of Labour, Conservative blue or Nationalist green as well as with huge hoardings denouncing the opposition in crude, strident terms. The people often used their front window to declare their own loyalties. During the 1891 North-east Manchester by-election two thirds of the houses in certain working class streets displayed party colours.[24] Even after the War Ordsall women continued to wear blue overalls on election day to express their support for the Conservative candidate.[25] Nor were such public expressions of political fealty limited to election times. Firms in the Potteries made healthy profits by selling plaques, mugs, pots and busts commemorating political personalities

---

[21]In 1911 only 46 per cent of adult males in the North Manchester division were enfranchised, Peter Clarke, 'Liberals, Labour and the franchise', English Historical Review, vol.xcii, 1977.

[22]Gerald Berkeley Hertz, The Manchester Politician, 1750-1912 (1912), p.93.

[23]For an example of mass violence in Platting division, MCN, 25th October 1924. Between 1921-31 a higher proportion of people voted in working class than in residential wards, MG, 1st November 1934.

[24]MG, 7th July 1891.

[25]MS, tape 531(1).

and events. As H.J. Hanham has suggested, "At a very homely level politics clearly formed a staple part of the atmosphere of ordinary working class life."[26]

Popular politics overflowed with energy and emotion. J.R.Clynes recalled the "wild transports of delight" which followed his 1906 victory in North-east Manchester; Churchill's arrival at the beginning of his 1908 North-west Manchester by-election campaign was comparable to a Roman Emperor's triumph; the Irish Liberal Dan Boyle's 1906 municipal victory celebrations turned into a parade up Oldham Road.[27] Such enthusiasm was not confined to the pre-1914 period. The scene outside Manchester Town Hall in Albert Square, as people waited upon the declaration of results from the 1922 General Election, was compared to that of a fairground. "Up and down the streets adjacent to the square bands of youths and maidens marched, singing, cheering, chattering."[28] This was repeated a couple of years later in Salford where 4,000 crammed into Bexley Square whilst Conservative supporters merrily sang 'Three cheers for the red, white and blue' in Albert Square.[29]

This was not just politics, but also entertainment and a temporary opportunity for license enthusiastically exploited by the underclass. Sylvia Pankhurst recalled that during the 1895 Gorton election some workers "seemed to regard the election as a game, in

---

[26]H.J.Hanham, 'Politics and community life in Victorian and Edwardian Britain', Folk Life, vol.iv, 1966, p.6.

[27]Clynes, Memoirs, vol.i, p.109; MG, 14th April 1908; MCH, 2nd November 1906.

[28]MCN, 18th November 1922.

[29]SCN, 1st November 1924; MCN, 1st November 1924.

which it was important to be on the winning side."[30] Throughout this period children and youths, often the most joyous bearers of parental prejudice, expressed their primal political loyalties by forming themselves into bands which paraded through neighbouring streets. They called out the name of the favoured candidate, banged drums, sang songs in his favour and fought with rival supporters. This was a political carnival and it was sometimes difficult to decide where debate ended and celebration began. It was also a time of violence, particularly in unskilled and Irish districts because it was there that religious and national differences were most strikingly in evidence.[31]

Within this very public political culture Irish Catholics had their particular place. Whereas Conservatives extensively utilised the language and images of English patriotism to underpin their message the Irish had their own patriotic symbols which were paraded in the midst of campaigns. During the 1891 North-east Manchester by-election Irish girls symbolised the union of Liberals and Nationalists by wearing green in their hair and red on their dresses.[32] Nationalist clubs were also conspicuously decked out in messages of support for the Liberal or Labour candidate.[33] The Irish held separate meetings, usually in the local church hall, at which

---

[30]E.Sylvia Pankhurst, The Suffragette Movement (1931), p.135.

[31]For one such example, a fight between supporters of the Nationalist and Labour candidate in St.Michael's and a dissenting publican, MCN, 8th November 1919.

[32]MG, 10th October 1891.

[33]MG, 1st January 1910.

favoured politicians spoke, flanked by priests and prominent members of the laity. They also held more informal open-air meetings during the weekends and evenings of a campaign.[34]

As will be seen later, local Nationalist politicians attempted to overcome the political and social divide between Irish and English by pursuing policies which benefited the whole working class and used rhetoric emphasising those things Irish and English workers held in common. They nevertheless failed, not least because Nationalists were simultaneously forced to exploit their own national distinctiveness in order to appeal to Irish voters. Just as the Conservatives mobilised Anglicanism it was extremely useful for Catholic candidates to win the endorsement of the local priest. In 1910 Dean Hennessy of St.Patrick's urged Irish voters to support the Liberal Charles Egan in St.Michael's ward, rather than his English Conservative opponent. The Dean admitted that, whilst a councillor, the Conservative had done much for the Church. Nevertheless Egan, an Irishman and church organist, was "their own candidate" and consequently merited support.[35] After the First World War Labour also traded upon religious loyalty in those parts of the city with a substantial Irish Catholic presence. One Labour correspondent noted that a candidate in Harpurhey ward was "well-known amongst the Catholic fraternity and being 'one of their own' will receive their support."[36] This Labour tactic of annexation was fraught with danger: the candidate described was Richard Lundy, a second generation

---

[34]For their use of the 'Flags', a piece of open ground off Corporation Street, Ancoats, Arthur G.Symonds, 'Unfashionable Manchester', East Lancashire Review, vol.iii, no.17, 1899.

[35]MG, 1st November 1910.

[36]MCN, 14th October 1922.

Irishman expelled in 1929 for putting the interests of Church before that of party. Such a clash of loyalties owed a lot to the continued strength of the Catholic identity, but also something to the process in which Labour failed to transcend the cultural roots of popular politics. Whilst the party traded upon the old currency of Catholic religion and Irish nationality Labour failed to create a distinct identity for itself.

4. Change and continuities.

Although Manchester's public political culture was already breaking down in the years prior to 1914 the rate of its degeneration after 1918 can be over-emphasised. As has been suggested, many of its characteristics survived into at least the 1920s. While, as Hanham has suggested, the roots of this process might partly lie as far back as the 1890s - when organised games replaced politics as a spectator sport - heckling was still seen as a form of entertainment after 1918.[37] During the 1920s coal merchants and grocers continued to give away goods after their election to the Council.[38] There was even innovation along familiar lines: Conservatives were accused of using motor cars to influence the voters.[39]

Despite such continuities, however, there was a sense in which the immediate post-1918 period marked a clearing away of the detritus, the sweeping up of the remnants of nineteenth century

---

[37]H.J.Hanham, Elections and Party Management (1978), p.xv; SCR, 1st November 1923; MCN, 18th October 1924.

[38]MS, tape 745.

[39]The accusation was made by the secretary of the Salford Labour party, SCR, 10th November 1923.

concerns.[40] Whatever the general causes, Irish politics in Manchester were never quite the same after the creation of the Free State in 1922. This, at a stroke, removed Ireland from the top of the British political agenda and undermined the necessity for a separate politics based upon nationality. This led to the depoliticisation of community commemorations and celebrations: the St.Patrick's rally was replaced with a night of song and dance whilst the Manchester Martyrs' procession dispensed with its political meeting as early as 1923.[41] The Irish no longer appeared to be the principal threat to the stability of the British state and with that Irish nationality lost much of its overtly political meaning. The Irish ceased to be a point of contention at elections and campaigns stopped dwelling upon the city's English-Irish divide.

The old political culture was slowest to dissolve in the unskilled areas of Manchester. Here Conservatism retained its grip longest on English workers. This would not have surprised many of Labour's leaders. Before 1914 Ramsay MacDonald had dismissed the poor as a source of support for the party.[42] In 1910 J.R.Clynes wrote of his North-east Manchester experiences that "The very poorest people, who least understand the causes from which they suffer, were the least responsive to our appeals."[43] In post-1918 Hulme, where Labour was unable to gain a municipal seat until 1926, the

---

[40] W.M.Millar, Electoral Dynamics in Britain Since 1918 (1977), pp.1-9.

[41] MG, 26th November 1923.

[42] J.Ramsay MacDonald, The Socialist Movement (1912), p.93.

[43] Labour Leader [hereafter LL] ,21st January 1910.

Manchester Guardian felt that the influence of trade unionism was still much weaker than that of the 'Trade'.[44] This impression was confirmed by a report made at the time by the Hulme Labour party.

> Trade depression, with falling wages, short time, and a vast amount of unemployment as its concommitants, has meant a lack of interest in political and social questions: the individual's personal and domestic difficulties have become all-abiding, and he or she has little inclination for the discussion or propagation of ideas which, however sound, offer no immediate escape from the day's difficulties.[45]

Although before the First World War Labour had detached the heavy engineering areas of North-east Manchester, such as Gorton and Openshaw, from Conservatism, it remained much weaker in unskilled districts well into the 1920s. This was with the exception of those wards in which the Irish had an important say, principally in St.Michael's where the party won eighteen out of twenty contests in the period 1919-38. A similar social distribution of political loyalties was evident in interwar Liverpool.[46]

Despite evidence put forward by other historians it seems unlikely that politics had been completely transformed from an expression of religious division to the function of a dichotomous class cleavage. A qualification must therefore be placed against Eric Hobsbawm's statement that after 1918 "Britain was a two-class society with a two-party system which reflected it."[47] The influence of religion and nationality upon political choice was still profound

---

[44]MG, 3rd December 1923.

[45]Manchester (Borough) Labour party, Annual Report (1921), p.12. Available the Working Class Movement Library, Salford [hereafter WCML].

[46]R.S.W.Davies, 'The Liverpool Labour party and the Liverpool working-class', North West Labour History Bulletin, no.6, 1979-80.

[47]Hobsbawm, 'working class culture', pp.190-1.

throughout Lancashire even during the 1930s.[48] As already noted, before 1914 working class divisions in the county with a large number of Irish Catholics voted Conservative to a greater extent than those without. This continued to be the case after 1918.[49] On a national level, however, Catholics voted Labour to a greater extent than non-Catholics into the late 1960s at the very least.[50] In interwar Manchester the vote in most working class Parliamentary divisions was split fairly evenly between Labour and the Conservatives. There were very few safe seats for either party during this period; Labour was especially vulnerable.[51] Therefore, if there was a transformation in the underlying basis of working class political allegiance before, during or after the First World War it must have developed slowly and unevenly.

Even if political choice during the interwar period was increasingly determined by class this did not mean that other divisions within the working class had been abolished. Catholic and anti-Catholic could vote for Labour without losing their antagonism for one another. Political change in this instance was neither the cause nor the measure of a transformation in the social attitudes of the working class. Whilst workers continued to hold extremely 'conservative' views on a whole range of subjects they did not feel

---

[48]Henry Pelling, The British Communist Party. A Historical Profile (1958), p.62, 85.

[49]H.C.G.Matthew, R.I.McKibbin, J.A.Kay, 'The franchise factor in the rise of the Labour party' English Historical Review, vol.xci, 1976, p.752, table xi.

[50]D.Butler and D.Stokes, Political Change in Britain (1974), pp.156-8; J.M.Bochel and D.T.Denver, 'Religion and voting: a critical review and a new analysis', Political Studies, 18, 1970, pp.211-16.

[51]P.W.Campbell and A.H.Birch, 'Politics in the North-west', Manchester School, vol.xviii, 1950, p.239.

the necessity of voting Conservative.[52] The political agenda had changed and Home Rule was no longer an issue. By the late 1920s the Conservatives could no longer win support in Manchester simply by attacking Irish Catholics. Prejudice, in this form, ceased to be the primary motive for political choice.

5. Conclusion.

Although the contention that between 1890 and 1939 politics was increasingly influenced by considerations of class is not denied, it is suggested that the pace of this process was much slower than some historians indicate. Nevertheless, this period did contain important changes in both the structure and meaning of popular politics which had considerable impact upon Manchester's Irish and Catholic population. Firstly, by the early 1920s Ireland and Home Rule ceased to be of much significance. After this time Irish issues no longer directly controlled or even influenced the course of party fortunes, apart from the residual Irish attachment to Labour and hostility to Conservatism. Secondly, the popular cultural references of the pre-1914 period had lost much of their meaning by the 1920s. Specifically, the issue of religion, previously used by Conservatives to attack 'athiest' socialists and 'Catholic' Liberals lost much of its vigour. Thirdly, the nature of elections themselves was fundamentally transformed. By the late 1920s universal adult suffrage meant that each citizen could directly participate in the

---

[52]Robert McKenzie and Allan Silver, Angels in Marble. Working Class Conservatives in Urban England (1968), pp.152-3; H.J.Eysenck, 'Primary social attitudes as related to social class and political party', British Journal of Sociology, vol.ii, no.3, 1951, pp.204-5.

democratic process. Indirect participation, in the form of rowdyness, violence and heckling consequently lost much of its significance.

After the early 1920s politics ceased to emphasise differences of religion or nationality and elections failed to mobilise popular passions in the same direct and physical manner. The emergence of Labour, as a party attempting to appeal to the working class as a whole which interpreted politics as a means of extracting material benefits for workers, underpinned these changes.J.R.Clynes, an apparently lapsed Catholic, anticipated these more general changes in a speech given in 1907. Speaking in Ancoats he declared of Labour that

> as a party they had nothing whatever to do with a man's conscience or faith. He hoped they would always be defenders and protectors of freedom of faith and conscience. He desired to say to Christian and Agnostic alike that their proposals were industrial and economic proposals, and they dealt withe man's relationship to man, and not to his relationship to the Almighty Power.[53]

If only in a negative sense party politics had changed: it ceased to aggravate latent sectarian hostilities.

---

[53] MG, 23rd October 1907.

Chapter Eight. Irish Nationalism, 1890-1914.

1. Introduction.

It has already been suggested that some historians consider that Nationalism effectively prevented the Irish participating in native political parties until at least 1914. In particular, the Irish working class is said to have been 'distracted' from the politics of class. This chapter questions such assumptions and demonstrates that Nationalism did not isolate the Irish from mainstream British politics. Although the movement tried to further the cause of Home Rule, this was done with one eye firmly set on the structure of mainland politics. Nationalism was, in essence, a Janus-faced creature, at once appealing to parochial Irish concerns whilst forcing them into a wider political world. This was a reflection of the general dilemma of the Irish in Manchester: Nationalists recognised that they had their own concerns, but they were also keenly aware that they existed in an alien and often hostile environment. Home Rule and the Manchester context had to be reconciled. The argument of this, and the immediately following chapter, will be that Nationalism encouraged the political integration of the Irish into two particular British parties - the Liberals and Labour. It also ensured their mistrust of the Conservatives, even after the creation of the Irish Free State.

The the nature of the Irish-Liberal connection is also described. Although Parnell's alliance with the Liberals during the 1880s was initially tactical and expedient, by the 1890s it had become a strategic imperative. The consequences of this alliance were felt outside the Palace of Westminster and reverberated

downwards to municipal politics, nowhere more powerfully than in Manchester. This argument contradicts the prevalent view that the local Irish presence was usually unimportant and negligible.[1] Nationalists beginning their careers in the city during the last two decades of the nineteenth century worked in a movement which took the Liberal connection for granted. They became Liberals in both word and deed, but Liberals of a certain type with a character and identity all of their own. Inevitably, they were overwhelmingly concerned to achieve Home Rule and almost equally determined to defend the interests of the Catholic Church in England. Not so inevitably, they generally lay on the radical wing of the party and many were also strong advocates of the labour interest.

2. Manchester's Irish Nationalist movement.

In 1910 there were only 1,500 members of the Manchester and District United Irish League (UIL), a year in which membership had appreciably increased as the prospect of Home Rule moved ever closer.[2] The movement's formal membership was, therefore, quite healthy, embracing slightly more than one in ten of the city's Irish-born. Given that the movement's constituency also included those of Irish descent, the picture becomes less impressive. However, parties of the left wanting to represent the entire working class, like the Independent Labour Party (ILP), had a much smaller body of activists. Membership of some branches was revealed by the

---

[1]Paul Thompson, Socialists, Liberals and Labour. The Struggle for London 1885-1914 (1967), pp.25-7 and Alan O'Day, The English Face of Irish Nationalism (Dublin, 1977), pp.118-25.

[2]MCH, 7th May 1910.

Manchester Catholic Herald, also in 1910, and is summarised below.

Table 6. Membership of certain United Irish League branches, 1910.[3]

Parnell Club, Ancoats	125
Irish National Club, Hulme	112
Manchester Martyrs, Salford	87
O'Connell, Withington	75
Robert Emmett, Rusholme	63

The cohort of activists was mainly composed of the upper reaches of the city's Irish society, predominantly the professional and retailing middle class, teachers, skilled workers and publicans, all of them either of Irish birth or descent.[4] Priests were prominent in the movement, just as many Nationalists were also active in the Catholic Church.[5] Nationalism was a socially stratified movement. At the top was a hierarchy of 'notables' belonging to the Thomas Davis branch in the city centre. This acted as a club for the rich and better off, principally the large number of Irish provisions merchants. It was by far the district's richest branch and in 1910 raised one third of the total donation sent by Manchester Nationalists to the national UIL.[6] Every March between fifty and one hundred of these gentlemen Nationalists enjoyed dinner together on the Friday before the UIL's St.Patrick's Sunday rally. This was as much a social event as a political affair and continued even after

---

[3]MCH, 1st February 1910.

[4]A similar occupational profile was found in Scotland's Nationalist movement, described by a highly critical Forward in 1911 as being composed of "publicans, slum property owners, model lodging house keepers and provisions merchants." Quoted by Hutchison, 'Glasgow working class politics', p.134.

[5]Similar to Irish politicians in New York, Hugh McLeod, 'Catholicism and the New York Irish 1880-1910', in Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper, Raphael Samuel (eds.), Disciplines of Faith. Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy (1987), pp.346-7.

[6]It collected 114 out of a total of 395, MCH, 7th May 1910.

the creation of the Irish Free State.[7] It was a world away from the more humble club life enjoyed by other, more lowly, Irishmen content to play inter-branch whist and billiard matches. To affirm the Nationalist character of such events members sang 'God Save Ireland' at the end of the evening.[8]

The two most influential leaders of Manchester's pre-War Nationalism were Dan Boyle and Dan McCabe. They confirm the impression that many of Manchester's Irish leaders were members of the lower middle class. Boyle, born the son of a Fermanagh farmer in 1857, trained to be a teacher in Ireland, but came to Manchester in 1877 as a railway clerk. He rose swiftly from this humble position through the Nationalist movement and became organiser for the Irish National League, the UIL's predecessor, in Lancashire and Cheshire. He was also correspondent for the Nationalist Freeman's Journal which was published in Dublin. During the 1880s Boyle took a leading role in organising the city's Irish National Foresters. From 1881 to 1897 he was their district secretary and was twice elected Grand High Chief Ranger.[9] In contrast, McCabe was born in Stockport of Irish parents in 1853 but grew up in Manchester's St.Patrick's

---

[7]MG, 18th March 1896, 18th March 1925.

[8]As did members of the neighbouring UIL branches of Michael Davitt, Ancoats and New Cross, MCH, 25th June 1910.

[9]This account based on MFP, vol.viii, 1897; MCH, 8th June 1900; Manchester Evening Chronicle [hereafter MEC], 12th November 1906; MCN, 22nd August 1925.

parish. There he became active in parochial confraternities, the Old Boys' Association and Sunday school. A graduate of a Mechanics Institute, he came to own a small clothing factory in the district.[10]

The movement also found a loud echo amongst the rest of the Irish population, many of whom lived on, if not beyond, the borders of the pale. For this majority Nationalism - through its annual commemorations and ceremonial remembrances - provided a point of contact with a homeland many had never seen. It also gave them an opportunity to proudly affirm their nationality in a city and country where it was usually seen as little more than a quaint joke or occasionally viewed as a danger to the state. St.Patrick's Day was the most important of such moments, manipulated by Nationalists keen to propagandise. Manchester Nationalism had its own 'saints', apart from St.Patrick, who continued to live on in both formal ceremonial and popular myth - the three Manchester Martyrs. Executed in 1867 their deaths were annually commemorated each November by a parade. They were also recalled in less formal and more private ways. The Michael Davitt UIL branch owned what purported to be one of the Martyrs' hats. This was reverently kept in a glass case as befitted the relic of a minor saint.[11] St.Patrick's church also held the last letter written by Michael O'Brien, one of the executed men.[12] Even after fifty years their portraits were still hung in a

---

[10]This account based on MFP, vol.viii, 1897; MEC, 28th January 1907; MCN, 13th January 1912; CF, November 1913; Harvest, March 1895, November 1919, May 1922; St.Patrick's Jubilee Souvenir.

[11]MCH, 6th September 1919.

[12]Paul Rose, The Manchester Martyrs (1970), p.124.

number of Irish parlours.[13] They also continued to live on in oral legend - one respondent was told by her grandmother that she, quite improbably, had shared a prison van with the heroes.[14]

The poor and unskilled also spent much of their leisure in pubs run by Nationalists and in the unofficial Irish clubs which existed on the margins of legality. The latter not only provided the Nationalist machine with an important source of revenue but also gave it a strategic position within popular culture. Irish clubs were more concerned with dancing, gambling and drinking than formal politics and tended to express their patriotism through selling Irish whiskey. They nevertheless contributed to party funds, held political meetings and many of their members were active during elections. They retained their national and political loyalties, but not always their licence to sell alcohol - if they ever possessed one.[15]

The publican and the pub were a firmer and more respectable base for Irish politics. Manchester was famous for the Conservatives' domination of the drink trade and it was widely assumed that, as in Blackburn, "Slumdom to a man and woman is on the side of drink and therefore on the side of Toryism."[16] During the 1890s Stephen Chesters Thompson was said to have turned Ardwick into a stronghold

---

[13]MS, tape 1024.

[14]MS, tape 87.

[15]For the example of the Irish National Club, Addington Street, Ancoats, MG, 18th, 23rd March 1906; MCH, 30th March, 20th April, 30th May 1906.

[16]Quoted in Clarke, New Liberalism, p.34.

for the party on the basis of his brewery's influence.[17] As late as 1910 pubs were used to publicise the Conservative cause. Even during the 1920s publicans in the mining area of Pendleton retained an allegiance to their old party.[18] In contrast, amongst the Irish the influence of the pub was used for the benefit of Nationalism and, therefore, also of Liberalism and Labour. During the 1890s publicans canvassed for the Liberals despite the latter's advocacy of Local Option. As one Manchester publican wrote "it was in the Catholic public house that the National League was cradled."[19] Drink's extensive influence within the Nationalist movement did not go uncontested and critics were found in the local Catholic press and within Nationalism itself. They claimed that the UIL was almost entirely composed of drinking clubs, something which detracted from the proper business of politics.[20] Temperance advocates, however, found that the connection between Irish politics and drink too powerful to break and it was still pronounced after 1918.

Manchester Nationalism's principal object was the achievement of Home Rule through strictly sensible and sober constitutional means. The failure of the "physical force men" in the 1860s was one of Dan

---

[17]Geoffry Seuss Law, Manchester's Politics, 1885-1906, unpublished Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1975, pp.210-11.

[18]MG, 14th January 1910; Arthur Potts, Whitsters Lane, (Swinton, 1985), p.20.

[19]See two letters from 'Catholic publican', Manchester Citizen [hereafter MC] , 26th July, 12th August 1892. Liberal opposition to drink continued even after the Great War - the St.Luke's ward party voted to close one-third of public houses and impose Local Option, St.Luke's ward minute book, 13th April 1919, MAD, M283/5. A number of Labour party members were equally hostile, MG, 14th April 1908.

[20]MCH, 12th February 1904, 20th April 1906, 9th November 1907, 1st January 1910; see also E.P.M.Woolaston, The Irish Nationalist Movement in Great Britain, 1886-1908, unpublished M.A., University of London, 1958, Chapter Three.

McCabe's more abiding childhood memories, something which made him, and his contemporaries, mistrustful of violent methods.[21] Manchester-born Frank Farley, chairman of the Michael Davitt UIL branch in 1906, would also have uneasily recalled those troubled times; his father had been a Fenian during the 1860s.[22] The movement's formal aim was essentially procedural - to place Irishmen on the electoral register and ensure they voted for their approved candidate.[23] This was a self-consciously level-headed and practical movement in which Nationalism's messianic strand was unwelcome.[24] Few Nationalists were interested in the Gaelic League's attempt to revive 'Irish' culture. There was also little support for factionalism,which was seen as a luxury that detracted from the the movement's single purpose. The Manchester Irish were loyal not to one man but to the cause of Ireland, something which Charles Stewart Parnell, Tim Healey and William O'Brien all found out to their cost.[25]

Local leaders favoured a moderate version of Irish independence which left Ireland firmly within the Empire. It was even argued that Home Rule would be a way of "making Ireland a new source of strength to the Empire."[26] The Irish were, in the words of one prominent

---

[21]MCH, 17th March 1913.

[22]MCH, 28th September 1906.

[23]According to the chairman of the INL's O'Connell branch, Ancoats, MG, 9th April 1892.

[24]F.S.L.Lyons, 'The revolutionary generation', in Lyons, Culture and Anarchy in Ireland (Oxford,1979).

[25]MG, 18th March 1898. For Parnell see below; for Healy, MG, 15th October 1895; for O'Brien, MCH, 20th August 1910.

[26]MG, 17th March 1911 and also 9th July 1894, 19th March 1895, 3rd February 1913.

Manchester Nationalist, a "loyal race of people."[27] On the eve of Queen Victoria's visit to Dublin Manchester's Nationalists carefully distanced themselves from her more intemperate critics in Ireland. They even praised her for being "the most illustrious lady in the world."[28] At the annual Irish National League of Great Britain (INLGB) conference, held in Manchester in 1897, delegates called on the Irish to abstain from celebrating Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. This was on the basis that, without Home Rule, Ireland had nothing much to be happy about. However, the meeting carefully stated that this was not meant as an insult to the Queen herself.[29] Such delicate footwork was the result of Nationalists distinguishing between their loyalty to the Crown and their hostility to the system of government under which Ireland suffered.[30] It was also due to the fact that the Irish had to justify their aspirations in a city either apathetic or hostile to their cause. As the prominent local Nationalist Thomas Freeman Kelly advised

> Irishmen [...] should seek by temperance in conduct and in speech to win the goodwill of their fellow subjects in England, for they knew that it was impossible for a small people like the Irish ever to obtain their liberty except by the favour of the people among whom they lived.[31]

This position was reinforced by the support of both the English Catholic Church and the Irish Parliamentary party for the Empire.[32]

---

[27]When the chairman of an INL meeting in South Manchester suggested this he was generally applauded, MG, 2nd February 1892.

[28]MG, 20th March 1900.

[29]This decision was fully endorsed by Dan McCabe later on the same day. MG, 7th June 1897.

[30]MG, 23rd August 1910.

[31]MG, 20th March 1900.

[32]For the Church, O'Mara, Irish Slummy, pp.74-5; for Nationalism, H.V.Brasted, 'Irish Nationalism and the British Empire in the late

Nationalism's constitutionalist strategy was not only bred of the failure of the Fenians in the 1860s, but also of the generous Irish representation in the Commons. This gave the Irish a loud voice if, for most of the time, little power and led to a number of fallow years when the Liberals were either unwilling or unable to take a Home Rule Bill through Parliament. The movement consequently produced two myths which became almost necessary to sustain faith in the ultimate triumph of the cause. The first optimistically asserted that Home Rule was constantly just around the corner, claiming that the Irish were nearly always in the midst of the final struggle.[33] The second placed great faith in the agencies of democracy which, to all intents and purposes, were defined as the working class and their political representatives, both the Liberals and Labour. Success was thought inevitable under English democracy. These myths were annually aired, along with a desperately reiterated call for unity, at the St.Patrick's Sunday rally in the city's Free Trade Hall.[34] Here, usually 5,000 Irish expectantly gathered, their "boisterous enthusiasm" given new hope by patriotic songs and rhetorical speeches made by prominent Parliamentary Nationalists.[35] On these occasions the British working class was not blamed for its opposition to Home Rule as Nationalists were convinced that this hostility was purely based upon ignorance, fostered by the

---

nineteenth century' in Oliver MacDonagh, W.E.Mandle and Pauric Travers (eds), Irish Culture and Nationalism, 1750-1950 (1983).

[33]For example MG, 18th March 1903, a very bleak year for the prospects for Home Rule, and nearly every other speech made on St.Patrick's Day before 1916.

[34]For examples MG, 19th March 1895, 20th March 1899, 18th March 1904.

[35]Daily Dispatch [hereafter DD], 18th March 1901.

Conservatives, rather than malice. They were confident that once he knew the 'facts' the English working man would support their cause. Nationalists reserved all their hatred for the Conservative and landowning enemy and their bastion the House of Lords. Only their self-interest, it was said, stood between the Irish and Home Rule.[36] The Irish saw themselves as sharing with the English worker a common enemy. As the Nationalist John Denvir stated the Irish had a quarrel not with the English worker, but with "the class which misgoverned us, just as it, to a lesser extent misgoverned them."[37]

Manchester's Irish Nationalism was, therefore, a socially complex movement embracing all members of the Irish population: whether born in the homeland or merely of Irish descent, from the deeply respectable middle class of Moss Side who prefaced their meetings with gentle piano recitals to Ancoats' lumpen rowdies eager to break up Conservative meetings, and from the total abstainer to those who drank themselves into oblivion on St.Patrick's Night.[38] What they all shared in common, no matter how differently they expressed it, was the desire that Ireland be free of English rule. This was a discrete movement, involving nearly all of the Irish population at various levels of commitment. It left most English unmoved if not hostile. Nationalism, however, did not exist in a vacuum, it needed English allies and assiduously courted them.

---

[36]MC, 8th April 1892; MG, 18th March 1890, 20th March 1899, 18th March 1901, 19th March 1906. See also F.Sheehy-Skeffington, Michael Davitt: Revolutionary Agitator and Labour Leader (1908), pp.5-6; William O'Malley, Glancing Back (1933), pp.63-4.

[37]Denvir, Life Story of an Old Rebel, p.253.

[38]MG, 9th December 1890.

3. Liberalism and Nationalism.

Parliamentary arithmetic after 1886 made a Nationalist-Liberal alliance almost inevitable. In Manchester this developed into much more than the uneasily instrumental relationship some historians have described the Parliamentary accord as being.[39] Cooperation was widespread and occurred not only during Parliamentary contests, when Home Rule was often at issue, but also during municipal elections when it was never raised. From the late 1880s to 1914 St.Michael's and to a lesser extent New Cross wards were dominated by Nationalists standing as Liberals. Here selection was conducted jointly by the two parties and they also cooperated on registration work.[40] In 1894 C.P.Scott declared that in New Cross "All the good work they had done in the ward for years had been done by the union of the Liberal and the Irishman."[41] This mutual assistance was also much in evidence in other wards about the city. Local Irish allegiance to the Liberals had earlier led some Nationalists to revolt against Parnell's instruction to vote Conservative in the General Election of 1885. Sixteen branches of the INL protested at his directive, although only the Irish in Gorton were advised to vote Liberal by local leaders. As a punishment the district's branch was disbanded.[42]

---

[39] D.A.Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery (Oxford, 1972), p.153.

[40] MG, 24th October 1890, 21st October 1891, 8th October 1910; MCN, 28th October 1905.

[41] MG, 31st October 1894.

[42] C.H.D.Howard, 'The Parnell manifesto of 21 November, 1885, and the Schools Question', English Historical Review, vol.lxii, 1947, p.49.

The O'Shea divorce scandal of 1890, which resulted in the end of Parnell's tenure as leader of the Irish Parliamentary party, set the tone for the following twenty five years. Gladstone exploited the situation and presented Nationalists with a dramatic choice: they could either follow Parnell and put the Liberal alliance in jeopardy, an alliance which had appreciably improved the chances of Home Rule, or they could abandon him and put their trust in Gladstone's ability to pass a Home Rule Bill. The majority of the Parliamentary Party recognised that any real independence from the Liberals could only be counter-productive - the time of bartering between the two main parties had passed in 1886 when the Conservatives declared their implacable opposition to Home Rule. Therefore, whilst it still avowed a constitutionalist strategy, despite the abandonment of Home Rule by Rosebery in the early 1890s and Campbell-Bannerman's failure to take up the mantle in 1906, the Nationalist movement was stuck with the Liberal alliance. It seemed that there was, literally, no alternative.[43]

For Nationalists in Manchester there was similarly little question of a choice between Parnell and Gladstone. During the winter of 1890-1 they all but unanimously endorsed the Parliamentary party's decision. The Archbishop Walsh branch of the South Manchester division voted forty one to five against Parnell.[44] When North Manchester's Michael Davitt branch held elections for officers a contest was forced between Parnellites, including a former branch president, and supporters of the Parliamentary Party. This resulted

---

[43]For an account of this period, F.S.L.Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party, 1890-1910 (1951).

[44]MG, 20th December 1890.

in the latter sweeping the board.[45] The final index of the collapse of Parnell's support occurred during the 1891 St.Patrick's Day rally. Here only two voices - out of a possible 3,000 - registered their opposition to a resolution expressing the meeting's endorsement of the new leadership.[46] These were decisions dictated less by considerations of religious morality as political expediency: Cardinal Manning condemned Parnell in April, only after he had been completely abandoned in Britain.[47] Although Gladstone had manipulated the O'Shea scandal it ironically confirmed Manchester Nationalism's identification with him in particular and the Liberals in general. The 'Grand Old Man' quickly replaced Parnell as the object of Irish loyalty and affection. During the rest of the 1890s simple mention of the name of "our benefactor" and "the world's greatest statesman" was enough to raise a hearty Irish cheer.[48]

Subsequently, during the 1890s Irish men and women won prominent positions within Liberal ward and divisional parties. Many Irish became Liberals - even discussions of Irish history were coloured by contemporary Liberal economics.[49] They thought of themselves as quintessential Liberals.[50] This was in contrast to politics in Liverpool where due to greater Irish numbers Nationalism seems to

---

[45] MG, 9th March 1891.

[46] MG, 18th March 1891.

[47] MG, 2nd April 1891.

[48] Manchester Courier, 19th March 1894; MG, 25th March 1893, 20th March 1899.

[49] During a talk on 'Irish commerce and its destruction in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries' at the Thomas Davis UIL branch the speaker blamed English tariffs. MG, 13th October 1909.

[50] MG, 1st September 1890, 28th January 1891.

have been more independent of indigenous Liberalism.[51] In Manchester the Irish were powerful in only a handful of ward associations and very weak at the divisional level, something which reflected the uneven distribution of the Irish population. This can be seen in a breakdown of the North-east Manchester Divisional Association. Thirteen out of twenty six members of the New Cross ward executive council had Irish names,however there were only two out of eleven in Miles Platting whereas there were none at all in Newton Heath.[52] When the division subsequently selected eight representatives to sit on the Manchester Liberal Union Dan Boyle was the only Irishman.[53]

Gladstone's endorsement of Home Rule did not, as has been suggested, make it a less 'heretical' cause to the English. If anything, it merely made the Liberals themselves appear as renegades and contributed to their abysmal record at the polls between 1886 and 1906.[54] Nor could the increasingly intimate *Irish-Liberal* relationship obscure the existence of a large number of differences which continued to plague Irish and English Liberals. The hostility of a number of Liberals for Irish Catholics as individuals continued. Some Protestant Liberals exhibited a religious bigotry more usually associated with the Conservatives. The Liberal Louis Nott, chairman of the Manchester Protestant Thousand in the late 1890s, called on fellow party members to end their cooperation with Catholics at elections.[55] Mixed marriages were frowned upon whether

---

[51]Smith, 'Labour tradition', p.46.

[52]MG, 8th February 1897.

[53]MG, 17th February 1897.

[54]O'Tuathaigh, 'Irish in nineteenth century Britain', p.29.

[55]MG, 17th May 1899.

parents were Liberal or Conservative.[56] Many English Liberals also continued to consider Home Rule either unimportant or undesirable. In the mid-1880s those Whiggish grandees who controlled Liberalism's purse strings had been reluctant to take the issue, and the Irish vote, seriously. In the General Election of 1885 they almost went out of their way to offend Irish feelings. T.P.O'Connor declared that it appeared that the city's Liberals "had gone up and down the country in search of the very worst and most objectionable candidates they could possibly have."[57] In East Manchester the Liberal was a known Unionist; in the North-east he was an Irish landowner and a pro-Union renegade Nationalist.[58] In the early 1890s Liberal Unionists who actively supported Conservative candidates were able to remain members of the Reform Club.[59] This antipathy continued in some quarters until the eve of the First World War. In 1912 Sir George Kemp, who represented the middle class division of North-west Manchester, absented himself from the second reading of the Home Rule Bill. His divisional association, on which sat few if any Irish, didn't feel that this flouting of party discipline merited any comment.[60]

---

[56]McCarthy, Generation in Revolt, p.4, 10-13, 24.

[57]MG, 16th November 1885.

[58]Philip Whitaker, The Growth of Liberal Organisation in Manchester from the 1860s to 1903, unpublished Ph.D. University of Manchester, 1956, p.196, 260-1.

[59]MG, 14th October 1891. After a number of complaints the Reform Club decided that members who campaigned against a Liberal candidate would be asked to resign, MG, 15th October 1891.

[60]North-west Manchester Liberal Association, minutes, 13th May 1912 and attached letter from Kemp, M283/4/1/1, MAD.

Nationalists, on the other hand, were less inclined to support temperance campaigns. This can be attributed both to the importance of the Irish publican and Catholicism's mistrust of Nonconformity.[61] Prominent Irish Liberals were pointedly absent from the platform of a demonstration organised by Liberals to protest at the election of a brewer to the mayoralty.[62] The most important difference, apart from Home Rule, was Irish support for voluntary (i.e. Catholic) education, something which placed them in direct conflict with the party's strong Dissenting element.[63] Between 1906 and 1910 this latter issue strained Irish Catholic allegiance to Liberalism almost to the point of rupture. The issue of Home Rule, however, always brought them back to heel and prevented them permanently abandoning the Liberals in favour of pro-denominational education but anti-Home Rule Conservatives.

4. Liberal Nationalists.

Despite their differences, Irish men and women joined the Liberal party and were active within it. Although strong supporters of Home Rule their wider political activity was not constricted by this one issue. This section will concentrate upon the municipal careers of Dan Boyle and Dan McCabe who, as councillors and aldermen, respectively represented New Cross ward (1894-1917) and St.Michael's ward (1892-1919). Both were prominent Liberals, each became vice-president of their particular divisional associations and

---

[61]Nonconformist ministers were said to be behind the Liberal party's demand for Parnell's resignation, MG, 20th December 1890.

[62]MG, 23rd October 1907.

[63]The Nationalist T.F.Kelly thought it the only difference, MG, 31st January 1891.

during the 1900 election Boyle even served as Augustine Birrell's campaign manager in North-east Manchester. They were seen by their Irish and Catholic constituents as more than mere politicians. In New Cross, which was a double member ward prior to 1914, Boyle won an average of 290 more votes than his English Liberal running mate. In a meeting held during the 1897 campaign whereas his Liberal colleague was only "cordially received" Boyle was met by "prolonged applause".[64] In his last election in 1906, which preceded his elevation to alderman, Boyle managed to poll 603 extra votes. McCabe's rise up the municipal ladder, which culminated in his election as the city's first Catholic Lord Mayor was watched by both Church and people with extreme pride. When he was elected Mayor in 1913 one Irish tram guard excitedly telegraphed the good news to his wife, who was on a visit to Ireland.[65] These were men attempting to make practical the Nationalist claim that Irish and English workers shared many interests in common; they spoke and acted as pro-Labour Radical democrats.

Elected to a Council dominated by Conservatives and representing a party that had only reluctantly agreed to adopt a Municipal Programme, both men were nevertheless keen advocates of the municipalisation of the gas supply and tramways system.[66] By so doing they hoped the Corporation would "set the tone" in both hours and conditions for those workers employed by private enterprise.[67] Boyle wanted the Corporation "to act as a kind parent, and take the weakly

---

[64] MG, 19th October 1897.

[65] MS, tape 794.

[66] Whitaker, Liberal Organisation, p.221.

[67] MG, 27th October 1893, 21st, 25th October 1895.

by the hand and help them out of their difficulties."[68] They supported the introduction of the eight hour day for municipal employees and were enthusiastically endorsed by trade unions grateful for their efforts. In 1895 McCabe received a unanimous message of support from the Manchester lodge of the United Operative Street Masons, Paviours and Stone Dressers Society. He was thanked for

> the democratic services he has rendered on all occasions in the interests of the toilers in the last six years. The members had always been pleased to note that whenever the workman's welfare had been under consideration Mr.McCabe had taken a very prominent part in their favour.[69]

In 1894 Boyle was unsuccessfully challenged by the ILP secretary of the Bargemens' Union. By 1897 this former opponent was willing to support him as "the most stalwart champion in the Council that the Labour cause had ever had."[70] Such was Boyle's support for unions and their members that in 1906 he was the only municipal candidate to win the unsolicited endorsement of the city's Trades Council.[71]

Both men used their position within the Council to improve their standing in other ways. Each had his own administrative "little kingdom" within the Corporation.[72] It is doubtful, however, that they came near emulating their compatriots in the United States where patronage, not to say corruption, was an important means of welding

---

[68] MCN, 22nd October 1904.

[69] MG, 19th October 1895.

[70] MG, 21st October 1897.

[71] Leslie Bather, A History of Manchester and Salford Trades Council, unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1956, p.167.

[72] Law, Politics in Manchester, p.67.

political loyalties.[73] Each man held some limited influence over the livelihood of a number of their electors. McCabe was chairman of the Smithfield Market sub-committee which was principally responsible for the setting of stall rents and the making of contracts with suppliers. He was consequently seen as holding the market's economic fortunes in his own hands.[74] For example, when he spoke at a 1907 election meeting McCabe was forced to defend an increase in stall rents. He was able to turn the tables on his critics and won a round of applause by announcing the signing of a contract to import American cattle to the city.[75] Boyle held the important post of first chairman of the tramways committee between 1898 and 1906. Through his tenure he became personally identified with both the policy of municipalisation as a whole and the tramways in particular. The trams were known as "Dan Boyle's light railway".[76] Under his stewardship the committee was considered both a commercial success and a model employer.[77] However, he had been initially reluctant to take up such a politically delicate post, feeling that his nationality and religion made him uniquely vulnerable to criticism.[78]

---

[73]Levine, Irish Politicians, pp.112-13; Clark, Irish in Philadelphia, 136-42.

[74]MG, 25th October 1895.

[75]MG, 22nd October 1907.

[76]MCH, 10th December 1917.

[77]The tramways were a "branch of municipal work which has the admiration of all the citizens", MG, 30th March 1906; G.R.Askwith stated that the employees were "the best paid, best cared for, and taking it as a whole, have more holidays, than any similar set of men in the kingdom", letter dated 27th July 1906, LAB/101/CLS/L967/1906, Public Record Office.

[78]MG, 1st November 1906.

He was proved correct. Conservatives were only too willing to point to the large number of Irishmen working on the trams and to suggest that he gave preference to his co-religionists. Such accusations were, as in 1900, met with Irish protests, for when Boyle was attacked so were all Irishmen. Consequently, these Conservative claims only strengthened the bonds between Boyle and his constituents.[79] This accusation was repeated in 1906 when a Conservative also had the temerity to claim that Boyle's committee had lost money. At this, a number of Irishmen broke up his meeting.[80] Yet, although ready to defend his honour, some Irish believed that Boyle did show a partiality.[81]

Both men were part of Liberalism's advanced guard in more directly political matters. They enthusiastically supported working men candidates in the 1890s and endorsed Labour representatives in the 1900s. In alliance with trade unionists, socialists and other radicals they also supported the ILP's famous attempt to defend their right to hold political meetings on the municipally owned Boggart Hole Clough.[82] Boyle and McCabe were prominent members of this alignment: Boyle proposed an important amendment in the ILP's

---

[79] MG, 27th October 1900.

[80] MG, 19th October, 1st November 1906.

[81] MS, tape 794.

[82] A not dissimilar coalition was formed on Glasgow city council at the turn of the century under the name of the Stalwart party. Iain MacLean, The Legend of Red Clydeside (Edinburgh, 1983), pp.186-8.

favour whilst McCabe was one of only six councillors to vote against the introduction of a by-law which sought to prevent all political meetings in public parks.[83]

5. Conclusion.

Nationalism in Manchester was a discrete movement which, in order to achieve its primary objective had to be active in the wider world of politics. Nationalism was, therefore, not an impediment to political activity outside of the confines of the Home Rule ghetto but a strong impulse to reach beyond it. The failure of physical force in the 1860s compelled the Irish to make political alliances in order to attain Home Rule. Boyle and McCabe, the standard-bearers of Manchester's Nationalism in the two decades before the First World War, were keen to extend their political activities beyond the strict limitations of Home Rule politics. Although they won positions both within the Liberal party and Manchester Council on the narrow basis of the support of Irish electors their activities ranged far and wide.

They were at once 'ethnic' leaders and conventional Radicals. They were Radicals not only because of Home Rule but also because they represented poor Irish wards and, to improve their material existence in the city the Irish required strong trade unions and an interventionist local authority. Such measures also appealed to the working class in general whose votes were required if Home Rule was

---

[83] MG, 24th October 1896; H.C.Rowe, The Boggart Hole Contest (Manchester, 1896); Fred Reid, 'Keir Hardie and the "Labour Leader", 1893-1903', in Jay Winter (ed.), The Working Class in Modern British History (Cambridge, 1983), pp.24-8.

to be attained. Consequently, both men became well-respected 'friends of labour' and embellished the Nationalist rhetoric of a common interest between English and Irish workers.

Chapter Nine. Labour, Liberals and Home Rule, 1890-1923.

1. Introduction.

The need to make alliances with those who supported Home Rule took the Irish in a Liberal direction during the late nineteenth century. The cleavage between the anti-Home Rule Conservatives and the pro-Home Rule Liberals made this an easy choice. However, the emergence of a third force in the early 1900s, the Labour party, put this two-party system in jeopardy. The new party's support for Home Rule and its claim to directly represent the interests of the organised working class posed a particularly acute threat to the Liberal-Nationalist alliance. However, despite protestations of 'independence' during the period prior to 1914 Labour acted as little more than a cadet Liberal party and the elections of 1906 and 1910 were fought under a loose notion that Liberals, Labour and Nationalists had some kind of common interest. In this context the split in Irish support for the two 'progressive' parties was of less importance than it might at first appear.

This chapter traces and accounts for the development of the Nationalist-Labour-Liberal alignment from the early 1890s to the period just after the creation of the Irish Free State. It begins with the formal Liberal-Irish alliance at its height and ends with it in tatters, the Liberals having been supplanted by Labour. This was a change in political allegiance which bore little relation to any supposed integration of the Irish into an homogeneous working class culture nor was it evidence of a politics determined by class.

2. Labour and the Irish.

As early as 1892 the Catholic Manchester Citizen predicted that once Home Rule had been won Labour politicians "might annex almost wholly" the Irish vote.[1] Until that had been achieved, however, it was the Liberals who would reap the benefits of the Irish vote. Due to the party's support for Home Rule and its undoubted position as the only effective anti-Unionist party in Parliament it was the Liberals and not the Independent Labour Party (ILP) or the Social Democratic Federation (SDF) that won most Irish votes. This division of loyalties was the inevitable consequence of Nationalist strategy: Home Rule had to come first, therefore support for the Liberals took precedence over all others. This was in spite of what Nationalist, Liberal and 'socialist' politics held in common. Not only did they all call for Home Rule, but in more general terms they each appeared to be on the side of the angels. For example, during the 1890s the SDF in South Salford attempted to present itself as being simply a more reforming variant of Liberalism. The party's 1891 Parliamentary candidate was a Fabian, being described in the local press as a "Liberal reformer and Home Ruler".[2] Moreover, ILP and Nationalist policies appeared to be so similar during an 1894 New Cross by-election that the Clarion accused the Liberal-Nationalist of having " 'annexed' the Socialist programme bag and baggage."[3]

In the short term, during the 1890s, the national ILP was periodically hostile to the Irish Parliamentary Party. This was because of their support for their Liberal opponents who the ILP

---

[1] MC, 12th February 1892.

[2] Local Fabian Society Collection, Misc.375, LSE.

[3] Clarion, 30th June 1894.

hoped to replace as the main opposition to Conservatism. Even though the ILP supported Home Rule, its prominence in the Liberal programme of the early part of the decade was seen as a 'dodge' thrown up by the party to obscure the 'real' issues of class. Consequently, in 1895 the Labour Leader accused Parliamentary Nationalists of improperly using their party's funds. Keir Hardie even felt moved to declare that he would never cooperate with T.P.O'Connor.[4] On occasion, however, Nationalists could also appear to be useful allies.[5] Difficulties were compounded in Manchester where the city's ILP was particularly hostile to Liberalism. There the party's constitution forbade members voting for another party.[6] Therefore, before 1900, in spite of their advanced leanings local Nationalists were damned by the ILP for their allegiance with the Liberals.

The centrality of Home Rule within Lancashire's politics during the 1890s accentuated the ILP's general difficulty in attracting both Irish and English working class votes. It was an issue which did not allow for compromise. In 1893 one party activist in Lancashire clearly outlined the problem

> the greatest obstacle we shall have to fight is the Home Rule question. If the candidate does not promise to vote for it, he will lose the Nationalist vote [...] If he does, the Conservative working-man will look upon it as a Radical dodge ...[7]

---

[4]LL, 19th January and 30th March 1895.

[5]LL, 12th January 1895.

[6]Woolerton, Labour Movement, p.8.

[7]Quoted in David Howell, British Workers and the Independent Labour Party, 1888-1906 (Manchester, 1983), p.214.

Leonard Hall, the ILP's candidate for North-east Manchester in 1894 argued that

> to win this seat it is absolutely necessary to convert at least a percentage of Tory workmen and indifferent voters to Labour and progressive principles. Will that be done by talking about nothing but poor old Ireland and Home Rule? Will it be done by putting Home Rule and Ireland in the forefront of the fight and at the head of the programme? No, sir.[8]

The party, nevertheless, unequivocally supported Home Rule. However, this did not usually do them much good with the Irish when opposing a Liberal. Moreover, they could still lose the Irish vote if the Catholic Church plumped for the Conservative, as it did in London's East Ham in 1894.[9]

However, beneath these superficial difficulties lay a mutual sympathy between the Irish and those who claimed to be the workers' true representatives, many of whom were of Irish descent. J.R.Clynes, who became the M.P. for North-east Manchester in 1906, gained his early political education within his local Nationalist branch in Oldham before joining the ILP. There, Nationalists were particularly concerned with working conditions in the cotton mills.[10] Joe Toole joined the South Salford SDF and later the Labour party without losing his commitment to Home Rule.[11] Beyond the city, Pete Curran moved from Glasgow's Nationalist movement to the SDF but managed to retain many of his old sympathies and connections.[12]

---

[8] Clarion, 21st April 1894.

[9] LL, 20th July 1894.

[10] Clynes, Memoirs, vol.i, pp.38-9, 308; Edward George, From Mill Boy to Minister (1919), pp.29-30.

[11] MCH, 24th April 1920.

[12] LL, 15th June 1895.

Nevertheless, during the 1890s there was no question that the Irish would abandon the Liberal alliance. McCabe outlined the Nationalist position for the 1895 General Election to a crowded meeting of Irishmen at Shamrock Hall in Ancoats. They wanted

> to bring about, as speedily as possible, the freedom of Ireland. They believed they would best do this by the continuation of their alliance with the Liberal party.

He recognised that there were

> many men at that meeting who were favourable to the labour movement. He above all others had not one word to say against the Labour party, and he believed that, above all other men, the Irishmen in this country had nothing to say against any party that went for the improvement of the condition of the labouring classes. The Irishmen in this country had to earn their bread from the sweat of their brows, and whatever was good for the working people and for the bettering of their condition would be to the advantage of the Irish masses in England. But he for one believed that the Irish alliance with the Liberal party would more certainly bring about the improvement in the condition of labour than by following the Labour party at the present moment [...] The Labour party was still young, and all it could do at present was to transfer Liberal seats to the Tories. - (Hear, hear.)[13]

Apart from Home Rule realpolitik, therefore, McCabe offered few reasons to oppose independent labour politics. His was a position dictated by Parliamentary numbers, for during the 1890s only an ILP zealot believed the party's claim to be a serious threat to popular Liberal support.

An improvement in Nationalism's relationship with parties of the left had to await upon the fundamental shift in British politics which resulted from Taff Vale. Just as it changed the trajectory of labour politics in general, the judgement also transformed the connection between labour's representatives and the Irish. The resulting Labour Representation Committee (LRC), with its majority of non-socialist trade unionists created a more amenable climate for

---

[13] MG, 11th July 1895. My emphases.

co-operation with Liberalism and Nationalism.[14] Manchester's LRC was especially moderate and had a strong contingent of Lib-Labs.[15] The 1903 Gladstone-MacDonald pact, which reduced the number of divisions where Labour threatened to split the Home Rule vote, particularly improved relations between the Irish and Labour.[16] After that time McCabe's reasons for not voting Labour gradually became less valid.[17]

In 1906 J.R.Clynes and G.D.Kelley, Labour candidates for North-east and South-west Manchester, both spoke the language of Liberalism and addressed themselves to Liberal subjects: 'socialism' was almost completely absent.[18] Kelley was himself a former Lib-Lab councillor.[19] This election bore the first fruit of the new relationship: for the first time UIL branches were decked out not only in Liberal red and Nationalist green but also in Labour yellow. At Manchester's St.Patrick's Day meeting of that year John Redmond looked forward to the time when Labour was returned as a party of

---

[14]For the full impact of Taff Vale and the chararacter of the LRC see J.Saville, 'Trade unions and Free Labour: the background to the Taff Vale decision', in A.Briggs and J.Saville (eds.), Essays in Labour History (1967); Henry Pelling, A Short History of the Labour Party (1982), pp.1-17.

[15]Hill, 'Manchester and Salford politics', pp.191-6. Also N.Reid, 'The Manchester and Salford ILP', North West Labour History Bulletin, no.5 (1978-9).

[16]For the details of the pact see Frank Bealey, 'Negotiations between the Liberal party and the Labour Representation Committee before the General Election of 1906', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, vol.xxix, 1956.

[17]For the change in relations in London see H.W.Benjamin, The London Irish: a Study in Political Activism, 1870-1910, unpublished Ph.D., University of Princeton, 1976, pp.323-6.

[18]MG, 2nd, 3rd January 1906.

[19]MG, 13th February 1891.

government without recourse to a Liberal alliance. He congratulated the city's Irishmen on the part they played in winning large majorities for Clynes and Kelley. Redmond concluded with the statement that "the Labour representatives [...] are our best friends."[20] After 1906 voting Labour was not seen as a break from the Irish allegiance to Liberalism, as the new party was seen as a radical continuation of the old Liberal party.[21] In many ways, the Nationalist Lib-Labism advocated by Michael Davitt had finally been achieved.[22]

3. Progressivism.

The two elections of 1910 marked the summit of the Liberal-Labour-Nationalist alignment. The most important factor by which it was underpinned was the Lords' veto of Liberal social legislation. This placed a large question mark over the fate of the newly proposed Home Rule Bill. The Lords, "the real enemies of progress" stood between Liberals, Nationalists and Labourists and their various social, national and industrial objectives.[23] The Lords made real the Nationalist claim that the achievement of Irish Home Rule and English reform were intertwined. Politics in this period was, for the Nationalists, conveniently dichotomous: it was a

---

[20] MG, 19th March 1906.

[21] Dan McDermott, 'Labour and Ireland', in K.D.Brown (ed.), The First Labour Party, 1906-1914 (1985), p.260, 265; Steele, 'Irish presence', p.241.

[22] T.W.Moody, 'Michael Davitt and the British labour movement, 1882-1906', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol.iii, 1953, p.69.

[23] MG, 8th January 1910.

question of 'the Lords versus the People'.[24] Moreover, the upper chamber held a special place within Nationalist demonology, being seen as the almost sole cause of Ireland's troubles. As Dan McCabe declared, they were responsible for "all the sorrow and all the emigration from Ireland during the last hundred years..."[25] Therefore, by opposing the Lords otherwise disparate groups found a common cause. In Blackburn opposition to the Lords drew together on one platform an unlikely alliance of Liberals, Nationalists, SDF, the Band of Hope and the Free Church.[26]

Their obstructionist and reactionary political role aside, the land issue lay at the back of this widespread hatred for the Lords. The Lords also succeeded in rekindling old progressive prejudices, for if Radicalism was sustained by nothing else it was a hatred for aristocratic landowners.[27] As the UIL manifesto for December 1910 made clear "Landlordism and the House of Lords are synonymous terms". A fundamental transformation in the nature of land ownership was anticipated by most members of the alliance. Underneath this canopy socialists and Liberals, Nationalists and English, town dweller and villager found common ground. In Manchester progressive politicians had been attempting to build this consensus for a number of years. In 1892 Munro, the Liberal candidate for East Manchester, based his campaign on the connection between landowners and the Conservative party and their consequent joint hostility to the

---

[24] MG, 25th October 1909.

[25] MG, 24th November 1910. My emphases.

[26] Howell, British Workers, p.210.

[27] T.W.Heyk, 'Home Rule, Radicalism and the Liberal party, 1885-1895', Journal of British Studies, vol.xiii (1974), pp.68-9.

well-being of both the English and Irish labouring classes.[28] The city's Labour candidates in 1900, 1906 and 1910 had seen "crushing landlordism" as one of the main impediments to social progress.[29] The New Liberals also thought land of central importance.[30] Land was a vital issue in municipal politics and was discussed with equal vigour by Labour, Liberal and Nationalist candidates. In New Cross and St.Michael's Irish candidates were keen to suggest that slum housing was a consequence of the failure to tackle landowners' power.[31] It was with no small degree of conviction, therefore, that Dan McCabe announced that, in attacking the Lords "for the first time the interests of the English working class and the interests of the Irish people are identical."[32]

Such was the force of the argument that during both 1910 campaigns Conservative candidates, particularly in the North, North-east and South-west divisions were unable to find a suitable justification for the hereditary chamber. To deflect criticism on this issue some came to advocate its reform or even abolition. Howell in North Manchester declared "You can hang 'em, drown 'em, do

---

[28] MG, 23rd, 27th June 1892.

[29] MG, 19th August 1900; 2nd, 9th January 1906; LL, 23rd November 1910.

[30] P.F.Clarke, 'The Progressive movement in England', Royal Historical Society Transactions, 5th series, vol.24 (1974), pp.175-7.

[31] As did Ruddin in 1903, Farley in 1904, Egan in 1910 and both Reilly and Fyans in 1912. MG, 31st October 1903, 21st October 1904, 1st October 1910, 31st October 1912.

[32] MG, 10th January 1910.

anything you like with 'em. I don't like lords."[33] By December the party had seemingly abandoned the Lords issue and attempted to make Home Rule the central point of the campaign.[34]

There were difficulties within the progressive alliance. Although the UIL manifesto formally gave no priority to Liberals over Labour, in those few divisions where the parties opposed one another a the Parliamentary Party clearly favoured the former. The national UIL was controlled by the Parliamentary leadership and was largely unaccountable to rank-and-file members. Consequently, their exclusive concern for Home Rule rode roughshod over local Irish loyalties.[35] This position naturally angered Irish Labour supporters who could argue - with justice - that the party was more committed to Home Rule than many Liberals.[36] It provoked an angry response from a number of UIL branches across the country. Nationalists in both Glasgow and Middlesbrough tried to overturn their leaders' decision to back the Liberal candidate in Labour's favour.[37]

Only one contest strained Irish loyalties in Manchester during 1910. This occurred in the South-west division in January. J.M.McLachlan, an ILP member, sought to replace G.D.Kelley and duly won national Labour backing. The Liberals, however, had staked a

---

[33] MG, 5th January 1910. Also MG, 6th January 1910.

[34] MG, 24th, 25th, 28th, 30th November 1910.

[35] MG, 23rd November 1910; Neal Blewett, The Peers, the Parties and the People (1972), p.351.

[36] Whereas only 30 per cent of Liberal candidates favourably mentioned Home Rule 70 per cent of Labour candidates did so. Blewett, Peers, p.324.

[37] Blewett, Peers, p.352; MacLean, Clydeside, pp.193-4.

claim much earlier and had adopted Needham well before Labour.[38] When both sides refused to compromise Dan Boyle was given the unenviable task of convincing the division's Irish that it was their duty to elect a Liberal. Boyle's appeal reflected his delicate position, being very cautious and almost apologetic. During this address, in which there appeared to be only negative reasons for voting Liberal, Boyle was forced to return to first principles.He reminded his audience that the UIL

> did not support Mr.Needham because he was Mr.Needham, nor because he was a Liberal, nor did they oppose Mr.McLachlan because he was a Labour man. They simply acted as a united organisation which existed for the specific purpose of winning self-government for Ireland and those responsible for the management of the organisation - and they had no reason to doubt their capacity - had asked them to support the Liberal on this occasion. They had no personal fault to find with Mr.McLachlan whatsoever...[39]

It was only with great reluctance that the Irish followed this directive, their defection putting an end to McLachlan's campaign, based as it was on an appeal both to trade unionists and the Irish.[40] With the progressive vote still split the Liberal had to wait until December before he could win the division. The Irish, therefore, could still be prevailed upon to vote Liberal rather than Labour - if only with some difficulty.

---

[38]For more detailed background to this disagreement, Blewett, Peers, pp.24-9.

[39]MCH, 15th January 1910, my emphases. Boyle's argument was rather more conciliatory than the one offered by T.P.O'Connor when he wrote to the wife of Richard Pankhurst, who stood as ILP candidate for Gorton in 1895, that "We have nothing but admiration for your husband, but we cannot support the people he is mixed up with." Pankhurst, Suffragette Movement, p.133.

[40]MG, 14th January 1910. McLachlan thought the Irish defection to have been decisive, LL, 21st January 1910.

Boyle's argument was, nevertheless, almost past its time. In 1910 the Irish voted for a Liberal in preference to Labour only after intensive Nationalist pressure had been brought to bear and they had been persuaded that not to vote Liberal would weaken the chances of Home Rule. This rationale was being weakened both by the close ties between Liberals and Labour and by the way that Labour had replaced the Liberals as the anti-Conservative party in certain districts of the city. Labour had held North-east Manchester and Gorton since 1906, whereas the South-west and East divisions had been won by the party at one time or another since that time. The Liberal party in these working class areas was slowly disintegrating, leaving the field clear for Labour. In 1911 the Liberal club in New Cross ward closed down; in 1913 the party's position in the North-east division was the cause of some concern.[41] If for no other reason, Irish Nationalists increasingly voted Labour because the Liberal was absent.

4. The end of Home Rule.

The First World War began a chain of events which fundamentally changed the direction and character of the Nationalist movement in Ireland, Britain and Manchester. Some historians see the recruitment of Irishmen in Britain as evidence of their 'integration'.[42] Irishmen in the city eagerly took up the call - it was estimated that as many as 8,000 had entered the forces by October 1914. However, this was more an expression of what L.W.Brady calls their "duality of

---

[41]Manchester Liberal Federation, General Committee, minutes, 7th July 1911, 6th June 1913, MAD, M283/1/4/1.

[42]Lees, Exiles, pp.242-3.

loyalty" rather than adherence to one society or nation state.[43] These men had been exhorted to enlist by their Nationalist leaders as well as their Church in order to defend not just the Empire, but also Catholic Belgium and the Home Rule Bill.[44] Irish Nationalists quickly became some of the Empire's most enthusiastic recruiting sergeants.[45] The Manchester Martyrs' parade in November 1914 reflected the Nationalist support for the conflict. Instead of the usual condemnation of English wrongs the march was accompanied by a band playing 'It's a long way to Tipperary' along with the national anthems of all the Allied countries.[46] The city's UIL initially even discussed the possibility of forming a separate regiment for the county's Irishmen. In Glasgow, London and, most notably, Tyneside separate Irish battalions were actually formed. Having been denied that opportunity, many of Manchester's Irishmen joined the Dublin Fusiliers rather than a Lancashire regiment. Ironically, many of these men were stationed in Dublin at the time of the 1916 Easter Rising.[47]

---

[43]Estimate made by T.P.O'Connor, MCH, 10th October 1914; the phrase is L.W.Brady's, T.P.O'Connor and the Liverpool Irish (1981), p.220.

[44]For John Redmond's support, MG, 4th August 1914; for the Bishop of Salford's support for the defence of Belgium, MG, 22nd August 1914.

[45]T.P.O'Connor became increasingly preoccupied with bashing the Hun, Brady, O'Connor, pp.233-5. For examples of Nationalist enthusiasm for the War, Felix Lavery (ed.), Irish Heroes in the War (1917) and Lavery (ed.), Great Irishmen in War and Peace (1920).

[46]MG, 23rd November 1914.

[47]There was "a very large number of Manchester Catholics" in the 10th Battalion (Commercial) of the Dublin Fusiliers. MCH, 24th June 1916. The parish priest from St.Chad's became a chaplain in the Fusiliers during the War, MS, tape 85.1.

The Asquith government's execution of the 'rebels' and the simultaneous failure of constitutional Nationalists to secure Home Rule - even for an Ireland bereft of the six counties of Ulster - radically transformed Irish attitudes.[48] At the time of the Rising Connolly and his colleagues had been decried as traitors and dupes by Manchester's Nationalists; after their deaths they were quickly seen more as martyred saints.[49] The rising was soon reinterpreted by the Irish, not as an act of treason but as something holy and quintessentially Catholic.[50] The Irish Catholic Church, which had previously been only too willing to attack Fenianism, refused to criticise the rising.[51] St.Anne's in Fairfield held a Mass for their souls during which the parish priest praised the rebels' "high character and stainless lives."[52] The *Manchester Catholic Herald*, which had earlier joined in criticism of the uprising, later compared the weary and ineffectual members of the UIL with the dead heroes to the former's great discredit.[53] In both Ireland and Manchester the Irish quickly abandoned the UIL and their Liberal allies so that by 1919 both parties in the city were said to be

---

[48]See F.S.L.Lyons, 'The decline and fall of the Nationalist party', in O.Dudley Edwards and Fergus Pyle (eds.), 1916. The Easter Rising (1968).

[49]The Thomas Davis UIL branch immediately condemned the Rising but opposed the executions and called for clemency. MCH, 6th May, 20th May, 1916. At the time T.P.O'Connor noted how the executions had turned the Irish from the UIL, Brady, O'Connor, pp.227-32.

[50]Sheridan Gilley, 'Pearse's sacrifice: Christ and Cuchulain crucified and risen in the Easter Rising, 1916', in Obelkevich, Roper, Samuel, Disciplines of Faith.

[51]Roger McHugh, 'The Catholic Church and the Rising', in Dudley Edwards and Pyle, The Easter Rising, p.200.

[52]MCH, 5th August 1916.

[53]MCH, 29th July 1916.

mainly the preserve of only older Irishmen.[54] When Manchester's Irish soldiers eventually came home, having saved Belgium but lost Home Rule, a small number were prepared to put aside pre-1914 constitutional principles and continue the fight for Irish independence by more direct and violent means.[55] Theirs was a disappointment all the more bitter after seeming that independence had been all but won in 1914.[56]

It took time for the transformation in political loyalties to register in the city. Liberals in Miles Platting ward, whose Catholic population had been increasing since the 1890s, continued to assume that they could call on Irish loyalties after the War. In 1919 the ward party sent a deputation to the Michael Davitt UIL branch to secure support in a by-election. The branch's response is unknown, but the result gave Labour the ward with 70 per cent of the poll with the Liberals coming third, winning only 12 per cent of the vote. Moreover, the Manchester Catholic Herald considered that Catholics had been instrumental in Labour's victory.[57] In 1922 the ward party attempted to persuade a Dr.Remers to stand for them as, being a Catholic, it was thought he would be able to secure their

---

[54]MCH, 15th July 1916, 17th May and 27th September 1919.

[55]As was Sean Morgan, killed during the 1920 police raid on Hulme's Irish Club.

[56]The Free Trade Hall St.Patrick's celebrations of 1913 and 1914 were probably the best attended and most enthusiastic of the post-Parnell era, MG, 17th March 1913, 16th March 1914.

[57]Miles Platting ward Liberal Council, minutes, 15th April 1919, MAD, M283/3; MCH, 10th May 1919.

votes, described as being something of an "item" in the district. He refused, preferring St.Michael's, and left the party, as many other Liberal branches, to slowly slip into disrepair and inaction.[58]

Although the UIL was formally disbanded as late as May 1923, it had long lost the leadership of the Irish in Britain to the Sinn Fein-led Irish Self-Determination League (ISDL). This change in political leadership echoed a similar transformation in Ireland itself. Manchester was at the cutting edge of this process in Britain. Members of the city's Sinn Fein had proposed the formation of the ISDL in 1919.[59] For those brought up within the old movement this was a painful period of transition which they did not all accept without a fight. In 1919 a majority of the Michael Davitt branch in St.Michael's ward voted against forming closer ties with the ISDL. This, nevertheless, only resulted in the minority leaving the branch.[60] A year later the Thomas Davis branch gave up the battle entirely, disbanded and turned itself into a wholly non-political Irish club.[61]

Between 1919 and 1922, as the situation in Ireland degenerated into open warfare, the ISDL enjoyed more support than ever had the UIL. The movement's most powerful base was formed in Manchester: in 1921 the Manchester District claimed 7,465 of a national membership of 38,726.[62] During these few years the Irish were active in the

---

[58]Platting minutes, 4th, 12th October 1922.

[59]MG, 31st March 1919.

[60]MCH, 6th September and 13th September 1919.

[61]MCH, 19th July 1920.

[62]MCH, 11th March 1922. It should be recalled that even at its peak the UIL could claim no more than 1,500 members in the city.

cause of independence to an unprecedented extent, showing "an increased sense of responsibility toward the motherland."[63] They took to the streets and greeted Republicans released from Strangeways prison as heroes. The *Manchester Catholic Herald* felt able to condone Irish counter-violence - on condition that it remained over the water.[64] Even the Liberal councillor Hugh Lee, a member of the Manchester ISDL's executive and provisions merchant, a man in the mould of the leaders of pre-War Nationalism, was drawn to observe that

> for many years the Irish people had worked constitutionally, but the only answer from the Government was shattered hope and coercion. Finally, Irishmen were driven to hitting back with the same weapons with which they were attacked.[65]

During this period Labour consolidated its strength amongst the city's Irish population, although Liberalism retained residual support. The Manchester Labour party managed to appeal to a cross-section of Nationalist feeling, including pre-1914 Liberals, hostile to the ISDL, leaders of the ISDL and even those willing to take up arms to ensure independence.[66] The city party organised meetings and demonstrations in support of Irish independence and called on both the national party and the Trade Union Congress to support a down tools policy to halt shipments of arms to Ireland.[67]

---

[63] MCH, 21st August 1920.

[64] MCH, 25th June 1921.

[65] MCH, 26th March 1921.

[66] MG, 9th, 14th April 1920; ASSI 52/331, PRO.

[67] During 1920 the Irish Question was strongly associated with the Russo-Polish war in which the government sent arms to the Poles. See Manchester (Borough) Labour Party, Annual Report (1920), p.7; Salford Central Labour Party, minutes, 7th August, 1st September 1920. Available, WCML.

The national Labour party, however, did not enjoy the unqualified trust of the Irish who suspected it of trimming.[68] The national leadership was especially uneasy about Ireland and ignored the issue when possible.[69] Irish members of the party was evidently unhappy about their leaders' prevarication. Thomas Neafsey, a Manchester resident since 1900 and a member of the party since 1916, gave vent to his dissatisfaction at a meeting in South Salford in 1920:

> 'though a member of the Labour Party he was not going to sell himself, body and soul, to that party, for his first thoughts were for justice to the land that gave him birth.[70]

J.R.Clynes, at once a local M.P. and national Labour figure, felt the full force of Irish frustration with the party's prevarication. In 1918 he was suspected, through membership of the War Cabinet, of supporting conscription in Ireland and opposing Home Rule. Only by hastily denying these two charges did Clynes avoid being opposed by a Nationalist candidate in his Platting division in 1918.[71] Clynes was faced with the old dilemma of having to satisfy his many Irish constituents whilst not alienating the English, an especially difficult task during the dramas of 1916-22. After 1918 the Irish vote had very probably also increased, given the way in which the

---

[68]Christopher Howard, 'Expectations born to death: local Labour party expansion in the 1920s', in Winter, Working Class, p.67.

[69]J.Dunsmore Clarkson, Labour and Nationalism in Ireland (New York, 1925), p.437.

[70]MCH, 24th April, 1st May 1920.

[71]The Platting division was a redrawn version of the pre-1914 North-east Manchester seat and contained many Irish areas, including St.Michael's ward. The Nationalist candidate was to have been Dan Boyle. MG, 22nd, 25th, 26th November 1918.

pre-1914 franchise excluded many of the poor. Universal manhood suffrage undoubtedly benefited this group, amongst whom the Irish were mainly found. Tensions emerged during a Clynes meeting in 1918.

> There was general agreement on questions of pensions, better wages, and social conditions, but when the Irish question was discussed there was much difference of opinion. "Ireland should have been conscripted," said one woman. "You know nothing about it," replied another.[72]

Despite such local difficulties, however, Labour was still the only 'friend of Ireland' left. Moreover, the party could ill-afford to alienate Irish Catholic voters: they comprised a vital part of the party's post-1918 constituency.[73]

Nationalist activity within the city directly followed the ebb and flow of British coercive measures in Ireland and as quickly as it had grown the ISDL withered and died. During 1921 it lost half of its membership. The death blow fell with the divisions and confusions over support for the Free State. By July 1922 it was described by a former member as a "derelict society."[74] Similarly, Ireland as an important issue, had almost immediately disappeared from British politics by 1923. T.P.O'Connor was forced to concede that the General Election of that year was the first in which the Irish would vote on "purely British issues."[75]

---

[72] MG, 19th November 1918.

[73] Howard, 'Expectations born to death', pp.67-8.

[74] MCH, 8th July 1922.

[75] MG, 3rd December 1923.

5. After Home Rule.

Labour's strategy to include both the Irish and non-Irish within its constituency can be best demonstrated by highlighting how they were integrated into the campaigns of one particular candidate, Joe Toole of South Salford. Toole contested this strongly working class division five times between 1923 and 1935. He won only twice - in 1923 and 1929. On average the popular vote was almost evenly divided between Labour and the Conservatives during his five elections, as after 1923 the Liberals were unable to field a candidate. Toole received an average of 47.9 per cent whereas his Conservative opponents gained 48.4 per cent. Toole was locally born of second-generation Irish Catholic parents and the division contained five Catholic churches, their combined parochial populations of voting age amounting to about 10 per cent of the electorate. In such a marginal constituency, therefore, the Catholic vote was vital for victory.

Although Ireland was never a political issue in the division, Toole's Conservative opponents made a traditional appeal to patriotism, deference and religion.[76] In reply Toole assiduously combined an appeal primarily to class and only secondarily to Catholic Irish loyalty. The main thrust of almost all his campaign speeches was a call for class unity, with Labour portrayed as the sole defender of working class interests. His was an unforgiving and stark characterisation of class. In 1923 he described any docker voting for his Conservative opponent as a "'class traitor'".[77] In

---

[76] SCR, 6th September, 25th October 1924, 31st May 1929. In 1935 he was narrowly defeated by the son of Lord Mowbray and Stourton, SCR, 8th November 1931.

[77] MG, 22nd November 1923.

1931 he declared that "I know which side to be on, and that is the side of the working classes against their rulers and oppressors."[78] He literally campaigned on bread and butter issues, something reflected in one childrens'song heard around the streets in 1929

> Vote, vote, vote for Mr.Toole,
> He is sure to win the day,
> For the children must be led,
> With butter on their bread,
> So vote, vote, vote for Mr.Toole.[79]

This call, however, was embroidered with a specific appeal to his fellow Irish Catholics. In 1929 he circulated a leaflet printed in green ink which contained endorsements from T.P.O'Connor and a Catholic priest.[80] However, this was entirely subservient to the general class tone of his speeches. During 1923 Toole visited Mount Carmel school where, he reminded his audience, he had been educated. However, he did not use the occasion to make a plea for votes simply because of his Catholicism and national origin. Instead he returned to his familiar theme and declared that

> If they had politics at all in a working class community like that, it must be bread-and-butter politics, and if they looked into that vital matter closely they would see that the only party which dealt with that kind of politics was the Labour Party, whose whole existence was based on the social and economic betterment of the people.[81]

In other words, Toole did not address himself, except in a very weak form, to Irish Catholics as anything other than members of the working class. This position should be compared with that found in Liverpool where Toole contested the Everton division in 1922. The

---

[78]SCR, 16th October 1931.

[79]SCR, 31st May 1929.

[80]Millie Toole, Our Old Man (1948), p.36, 88.

[81]MG, 30th November 1923.

sectarian nature of this campaign came as something of a shock to the candidate, especially when he discovered the existence of Catholic and Protestant 'no-go' areas.[82] Compared to Liverpool the Irish and Catholics of Salford had been integrated into the rest of the working class. But Toole's class-based rhetoric made the extent of this integration more apparent than real.

6. Conclusion.

Labour politicians in Manchester always favoured Home Rule, indeed a a number of them were also of Irish origin. However, the Nationalist alliance with the Liberals prevented the Irish giving the ILP or the SDF significant support, for their votes were needed to return the only candidate with a reasonable chance of defeating the anti-Home Rule Conservatives - the Liberal. Nevertheless, Irish Liberals were sympathetic to Labour's cause and after the rapprochment between the LRC and the Liberals they firmly backed the party. Certain residual difficulties remained prior to 1914 - as South-west Manchester indicated. After Asquith's execution of the 1916 rebels and Lloyd George's introduction of conscription to Ireland in 1918 Labour replaced the Liberals as the natural repository of Irish votes. After the creation of the Irish Free State the Irish seemingly disappeared as a distinct political body and had apparently traded in their 'Irish' identity to become 'workers'. This was how Labour would have wanted it - as the party claimed to be for all the working class and did not court the special favours of any one section. This was, however, a deceptive transformation. Chapter

---

[82] Toole, Fighting Through Life, pp.139-44.

Eleven will show that well into the 1930s Irish Catholics retained a strong sense of their distinct identity - an identity which brought them into direct conflict with Labour.

Chapter Ten. The Politics of the Catholic Church, 1890-1939.

1. Introduction.

Just as the Catholic Church's influence upon the general secular conduct of its adherents could be considerable, although at times very uneven, so it was in the particular realm of politics. In fact, before 1914, the Church was the only serious rival to Nationalism's dominant position within the Irish Catholic population. The Catholic Church's political influence was mainly exerted in three ways: generally through its social teaching, during School Board and Poor Law Board elections and on those specific occasions when the Church's interests were seemingly threatened by a particular party.

In terms of political influence Catholicism should be contrasted with Methodism, for Catholicism was not an ethical religion in the sense that Nonconformity was. It did not automatically entail a certain type of lifestyle. A Catholic did not generally chose to become a Catholic, but was born into the faith; adherence did not depend upon sobriety or thrift but simple attendance at Mass - and sometimes not even that.[1] Catholicism gained its strength by retaining an influence upon the offspring of existing adherents, rather than by making converts. It was a religion based less on ideas and more on familial, national and social relationships. When the Church tried to extend the meaning of Catholicism into abstinence from drink and more 'respectable' conduct it was not

---

[1]For the role of Methodism in one Durham working class community, Robert S.Moore, 'Religion as a source of variation in working class images of society', in Martin Bulmer (ed.), Working Class Images of Society (1977), pp.44-6; Robert Moore, Pit-Men, Preachers and Politics (Cambridge, 1974), pp.93-119. For its influence in Wales, W.R.Lambert, 'Some working class attitudes towards organised religion in nineteenth century Wales', Llafur, vol.ii, 1976.

successful. However, unlike Methodism, Catholicism was accepted by a substantial number of working people. Although these working class adherents were unwilling or unable to be more than imperfect Catholics the scope of the Church's influence was potentially much more extensive even if it was usually variable.

The English Catholic Church's social teaching was particularly generous, allowing for a number of contrasting interpretations, so that all three major political parties - Conservative, Labour and Liberal - could legitimately fit somewhere within it. 'Socialist', anti-'socialist' and even the occasional Communist felt able to retain an allegiance to their shared Church despite the conflicting nature of party loyalties. Much more powerful than Catholic teaching was the pragmatic desire to maintain parochial schools.

This chapter sketches the nature of Catholic politics prior to 1918. It suggests that whereas Catholicism's opposition to 'socialism' has been overstated, Catholic support for the Labour party was still problematic. The strength of the schools issue is also discussed: this one issue explains why Irish Catholics remained a thorn in the side of both pre-1914 Liberals and post-1918 Labourists.

2. Catholic teaching.

Historians have emphasised the Catholic Church's opposition to 'socialism' at the cost of overlooking its parallel critique of capitalism. In fact, the Church firmly situated itself between these two forces, standing for "a controlled Individualism and modified Collectivism."[2] In part this was because the English Catholic Church was conscious of the fact that it was an institution which had preceded capitalism. This led to a sense that the Church was detached from industrial society; as Canon Sharrock of St.John's reminded delegates to the 1913 Trades Union Congress, the rise of capitalism had required the demise of the English Catholic Church.[3] Such feelings were reinforced by the nature of the Catholic population, mainly a combination of aristocratic English and poor Irish with a very small middle class involved more in the professions and retailing than industry. By both inclination and necessity, therefore, the Catholic Church did not go out of its way to enthusiastically justify the existing economic basis of society. Many explicitly criticised it. During 1922 Father Welsh, parish priest at Mount Carmel, Ordsall delivered a number of sermons on this subject, one of which was entitled 'The Evils of Capitalism'[4]

Nostalgia for pre-Reformation England dominated most contemporary Catholic social thought. From this stemmed two divergent tendencies - a pragmatic advocacy of practical reforms and a conservative romanticism hostile to almost every contemporary current. Although this latter strand was advanced by many of the

---

[2]Holy Name Messenger, January 1910.

[3]MG, 1st September 1913.

[4]MCH, 4th February 1922.

leading lights of intellectual Catholicism, such as Hilaire Belloc and G.K.Chesterton, it went largely unheeded by most adherents. For the majority, the most significant strand was the one that juxtaposed an idealised past against an awful present and sought reform. This approach embraced the Tory paternalism of Cardinal Vaughan and the Liberal gradualism of many Irish Nationalists to which Labour was ultimately heir.[5]

The Church abhorred the social and economic gulf between the classes, particularly the poverty and de-humanised position of workers, described by Canon Richardson as "paid slaves".[6] This led to the support of measures by both state and workers to restore a sense of balance to society, seen as missing since the Reformation swept Catholicism from England. However, whereas the Church attacked the economic structure of society, it also had a number of criticisms to make of working class conduct which was also blamed for causing poverty.

Central to Catholic social teaching was the role of trades guilds. These were seen as guarantors of social harmony by the way they united employer and worker in one corporate unit. The Bishop of Salford reminded the Co-Operative Society's 1897 annual meeting of this. According to him, guilds

> sought to obtain for their members not only temporal but spiritual blessings; they joined all classes together in the practice of justice; morality and religion - for, that was possible at a time when the whole people of this empire were knit together in the profession of one faith. There could be no doubt that if those guilds and kindred benevolent societies which then existed in what was called Merry England had not

---

[5] St. Wilfrid's Parish Magazine, October 1910; for Vaughan, see E.R.Norman, The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century (Oxford, 1984), p.352.

[6] MCH, 26th April 1907.

> been broken up and fallen prey to royal cupidity, we would not have required workhouses for the poor, we would not have had employers engaged in bitter strife, we would neither have had strikes, nor their calamitous consequences to our national industries; for from the highest to the lowest all were locked together in bonds of natural fellowship.[7]

The theme that society was divided into two camps, between the few very rich and very many poor was recurrent. Archbishop Vaughan called for increased social intercourse between the slum-dwellers of Ancoats and residents of Manchester's plush suburbs, those whom he saw as labouring and those who lived off this labour.[8] More practically,in 1899 he told a delegation of trade unionists of his support for a universal non-contributory pension and made plain his criticisms of the existing tax system, which fell equally upon rich and poor.[9]

In 1907 the Manchester Catholic Herald published the thoughts of Father Godric Kean on 'The Catholic Church and Socialism'. However, in this series of articles Kean revealed more about his attitude to contemporary society in general. He looked forward to a transformation of both individual conduct and of the structure of society. He also underlined the Church's advocacy of the right of the individual to own property, but reaffirmed that this did not entail the right to dispose of it at will and without regard to the needs of society at large. Whilst accepting differences of income he called upon employers to grant to their workers a wage that allowed them to provide themselves with decent housing, holidays and some savings. However, poverty, in his eyes, was the consequence both of

---

[7] MG, 25th January 1897.

[8] MG, 27th September 1898.

[9] MG, 2nd October 1899.

a poor income and intemperance. Although Kean's ultimate emphasis lay in the reformation of individual morality and "human character" under the tutelage of the Catholic Church he, nevertheless, realised that such a change of heart amongst employers would be a long time coming. Consequently, he accepted that workers required trade unions in order to maintain and improve wages and conditions.[10]

Trade unions, therefore, held a secure position within the Catholic scheme of things, being not only guardians of the material interest of the poor, but also the direct descendants of 'Catholic' trades guilds. Once the Church's fears that unions were secret societies beyond Catholic influence had been overcome, by the middle 1830s, it consistently supported their aims to restrict the overwhelming power of employers.[11] However, the Church only supported 'responsible' trade unionism: arbitration was keenly advocated. It was in this spirit that Cardinal Manning intervened in the London Dock strike of 1889. Strikes were seen as weapons only of the last resort, to be used in the furtherance of economic grievances and not part of a wider political strategy. It was only because he mistakenly saw the General Strike as an attempt to overthrow the elected government that Cardinal Bourne condemned it as "immoral". He was not hostile to the labour movement as a whole.[12]

---

[10] MCH, 25th January, 1st, 8th, 15th February 1907.

[11] G.P.Connolly, 'The Catholic Church and the first Manchester and Salford trade unions in the age of the Industrial Revolution', Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society, vol.xvic, 1985.

[12] Ernest Oldmeadow, Francis Cardinal Bourne, vol.ii (1940), p.218; Georgiana Putnam McEntee, The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain (New York, 1927), pp.302-3.

The Church wanted workers to escape the unfortunate consequences of capitalism and the perceived dangers of socialism. Both ultimately threatened individual freedom, and therefore were, in their different ways, dangers to the faith. It was felt that freedom could only be safeguarded by widespread ownership of property. In this light Belloc and Chesterton evolved the theory of Distributism which advocated the dispersal of property amongst the population. Amongst more idealistic Catholic students the theory had some hold.[13] In the United States a number of agricultural communes were established along these lines during the 1930s.[14] However, such a utopian, anti-industrial vision did not gain many adherents in Lancashire, where money was short, land expensive and the factory dominated horizons. Although a few of the city's clerics, such as Father O'Connor of St.Edmund's in Rusholme, advocated the theory, the Bishop of Salford made few, if any, attempts to apply it to the real world.[15]

The Church's relationship with the Labour party, especially prior to 1918, was subject to a number of misunderstandings which had their root in Pope Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum of 1891. Leo attacked 'socialism', which he chose to define as a creed that required a state monopoly of the economy and control of civil society. Under this 'socialism' all private property was to be appropriated and religious belief suppressed.[16] Before the Labour

---

[13]Gallagher, Uneasy Peace, pp.115-17.

[14]Neil Betten, 'The Great Depression and the activities of the Catholic Workers movement', Labor History, vol.xii, no.2, 1971.

[15]MCH, 4th April 1931.

[16]McEntee, Social Catholicism, p.95; C.C.Martindale, Charles Dominic Plater (1922), p.291.

party could be condemned, however, the Church needed to know whether Labour was 'socialist' in the way described by the Pontiff. Unfortunately, Labour's leaders failed to clearly define what they meant by the term and persisted in using it in a vague and - especially in Ramsay MacDonald's case - ethereal way. In 1914, almost in desperation, the National Conference of Catholic Trade Unionists appealed to MacDonald and Phillip Snowden to give a precise definition.[17] They do not appear to have been successful. The nearest Labour approached to a clear statement came in the 1918 constitution where one of the party's aims was described as "the common ownership of the means of production."[18] This was taken by a small minority of working class adherents to be iron-clad proof that Labour had become a fully-fledged 'socialist' party. The hierarchy, mindful of the number of Catholics who voted for the party, was unconvinced; when Cardinal Bourne finally declared his position on the party it was to state that, although Labour was not in itself 'socialist', a number of its members were a threat to the Church's interests.[19] Catholics continued to be divided on the matter of Labour's 'socialism' and during the early 1920s a number of inconclusive debates took place between those who rejected and those who embraced the party. A number of these occurred in Manchester.[20]

Although in principle the Church came to the conclusion that Labour was not 'socialist', in practice a number of priests and many of the well-to-do laity held anti-Labour prejudices. The upper

---

[17]Agenda, CF File, Folder No.2., WH.

[18]Martindale, Plater, p.293.

[19]McEntee, Social Catholicism, p.136.

[20]Martindale, Plater, p.295; LCH, 7th April 1923.

reaches of the Church seemed to be full of Conservatives. Sir Humphrey de Trafford was prominent in the Conservative cause at election time.[21] During the interwar period the secretary of Mount Carmel parish men's club was also active in Ordsall ward Conservative party; the chairman of Holy Name's mens' sodality was also a Conservative.[22] Hostility to the politics of the Left was especially pronounced during the 1930s when the Church became obsessed with the danger of Communism, weak though it was in Manchester.[23] During this period it was not unusual for parish priests to deliver sermons on 'The Menace of Communism' whilst the Bishop took the lead in warning adherents of the dangers of "Godless Communism".[24] Certain English members of the laity were attracted to Fascism as the only means of defeating this particular threat.[25] Several leaders of the British Union of Fascists (BUF) in Lancashire and Yorkshire were Catholic. However, it is extremely unlikely that, as Stuart Rawnsley suggests, many of these would have been of recent Irish extraction.[26] The BUF might have been anti-Communist, but it was anti-Irish too.

---

[21] MG, 17th October 1890.

[22] MS, tape 548; Miss R, tape in author's possession.

[23] For the hostility of the Manchester Catholic Herald to the "maniac" Lenin and his "ruthless warfare" against religion, MCH, 26th January 1924.

[24] MCH, 5th November 1932; Harvest, November 1933.

[25] Adrian Hastings, 'Some reflections on the English Catholicism of the late 1930s', in Hastings (ed.), Bishops and Writers. Aspects of the Evolution of Modern English Catholicism (Wheathampstead, 1977), pp.114-20.

[26] Stuart Rawnsley, 'The membership of the British Union of Fascists', in Kenneth Lunn and Richard Thurlow (eds.), British Fascism. Essays on the Radical Right in Interwar Britain (1980), pp.161-2.

Awareness that prominent members of their Church were Conservative, or worse, did not seem to weaken the religious loyalties of most Labour Catholics. Although one respondents' father was annoyed by the St.Alban's priest's regular election-time suggestion that "we'd rather you vote Conservative" it is clear that few paid it much heed.[27] The secretary of the ILP in Miles Platting before 1914 still went to Mass, albeit irregularly.[28] Moreover, most Catholics who became advocates of 'socialism' would not have recognised the extreme doctrine described by anti-'socialist' Catholics. As a debate between correspondents in the pages of the Manchester Catholic Herald made clear, they were not 'socialist' in the sense understood by their erstwhile opponents.[29] They were, for the most part, pragmatic reformers: as one Openshaw Catholic wrote in 1907,

> I contend that if the Socialists only remove the terrible nightmare from poor peoples' minds of having to end their days in the workhouse, they will have done a great deal in following the advice of Our Lord to His disciples when he said, "Feed My lambs; Feed My sheep."[30]

Some, however, believed in a socialism which made conflict with the Church inevitable; one turn of the century 'socialist' so offended the sensibilities of his parish priest that he refused to christen any of his children.[31] Another went further, became an atheist and anarchist and sent his children to a Socialist Sunday school.[32]

---

[27]These 'suggestions' were made after 1918, MS, tape 87.

[28]MS, tape 457.

[29]MCH, 7th August 1907.

[30]MCH, 21st August 1907.

[31]MS, tape 760.

[32]MS, tape 584.

Nevertheless, the Catholic readership of Morris's Dream of John Ball remained small. It is, however, purely informed speculation to suggest that proportionately fewer Catholics were 'socialists' in this sense than were non-Catholics.[33] What is clear, however, is that Catholicism did not serve as the basis for an ethical socialism to the degree that Nonconformity did.[34] It was a pragmatic religion which gave rise to a pragmatic politics. Even a number of those few Catholics who joined the Communist party, despite all the force of political ideology and religious dogma, maintained contact with their Church.[35]

3. School Boards and the Poor Law.

The Church attempted to defend its own interests by presenting officially endorsed 'Catholic' candidates during Board of Guardian and School Board elections. Until 1902 School Boards supervised the administration of the city's education system in which the Catholic and Anglican churches had a particular interest.[36] Catholics were told they needed representatives on Manchester's various Board of Guardians so they could "watch effectively over the Religious and Moral Interests of our unfortunate bretheren in Religion."[37] At least

---

[33]Liddington and Norris, One Hand Tied, pp.116-18.

[34]A.J.Ainsworth, 'Religion in the working class community and the evolution of socialism in late nineteenth century Lancashire: a case of working class consciousness', Histoire Sociale, vol.x, 1977, pp.376-8.

[35]MCH, 5th November 1932.

[36]For an outline of the School Board's activities see C.H.Wyatt, 'History and development of the Manchester School Board', Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society, 1903-4.

[37]Harvest, March 1923.

before 1914 this injunction appeared to have some validity, as members of the Protestant Thousand attempted to use their influence to undermine the Church's attempt to maintain the hold of the faith amongst adherents reliant upon public charity.[38] These bodies catered for the two most salient features of the city's Catholic population: their desire for a separate denominational education and their poverty.

To coordinate the various activities of Catholic representatives on these two Boards, as well as those who sat on the Council, both Manchester and Salford possessed a Catholic Registration Association (CRA). Bishop Bilsborrow hoped that they would create a sense of collective interest between Catholics on the city's public bodies.[39] To some extent this was achieved as Manchester's CRA embraced English and Irish Catholics, both those who distanced themselves from Nationalism and Home Rule's leading lights. In 1900 three of the CRA's most important posts were held by Nationalists, with Dan McCabe in the chair.[40]

The Church also successfully called upon Catholic loyalties amongst ordinary voters during such elections. This was especially so for the School Board; one contemporary described the Church as the most successful of all contending parties.[41] The Liberals in North Manchester were particularly aware of the power of Catholics and Anglicans in Board elections and sought to create a

---

[38] Harvest, August 1902.

[39] Harvest, April, December 1897.

[40] Harvest, September, November 1900.

[41] J.Rooke Corbett, 'Recent electoral statistics', Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society, 1906-7, p.48, 62.

counterweight amongst Dissenters.[42] The nature of the franchise helped the Church here, for, although a minority of electors were Catholic each had as many votes as there were members to be elected and, for the School Boards, a candidate could be given more than one vote.[43] This placed Catholics in a more advantageous position than in municipal and parliamentary elections. In fact, Catholic and Anglican representatives dominated the School Boards of both Manchester and Salford from their inception in 1870 to their demise in 1902. For these contests priests, some of whom occasionally stood as candidates, gave their parishioners voting instructions. In 1908, for example, Canon Lynch of St.Wilfrid's told participants at every Mass on the Sunday prior to the Board of Guardian elections to vote for the Church's approved candidates.[44] It was considered treason to stand against Catholic candidates, for they stood, not as representatives of a particular party, but of their Church. When Joe Toole stood as an SDF Guardian candidate in Salford he was attacked from the pulpit and threatened after the count. He also came last in the poll.[45]

However, not all Catholics responded to the Church's less than subtle appeals to loyalty. Although the secretary of Manchester's CRA stated in 1901 that for Guardian's elections "every vote is a sacred pledge in support of your Church" he, nevertheless, noted an

---

[42]Minutes of the General Council, Manchester Liberal Union, 30th April 1895, M283/1/1/3, MAD.

[43]Corbett, 'Recent electoral statistics', pp.43-6.

[44]MCH, 7th March 1908.

[45]Toole, Fighting, pp.98-100; Toole, Our Old Man, pp.14-15.

extensive apathy amongst his co-religionists.[46] The Harvest had suggested four years earlier that the success of Church candidates in Salford was due to the fact that, whereas only one in three Catholics voted in Guardian elections, even fewer non-Catholics registered their opinion.[47] By 1923 it was noted that the

> Catholic who advocates the support of Catholics by Catholics is sometimes regarded by the milk and water Catholic - and there are many at such election times - as intolerant and impudent...[48]

Increasingly, there was a contrast between interests of 'class' and religion on the Board of Guardians; many of the middle class adherents elected as Catholics had little sympathy with the labour movement. The School Board elections saw Manchester Catholics compete with the Progressives an amalgam of the Trades Council, ILP and Liberal representatives.[49] When a delegation of the unemployed led by the ILP met the Chorlton Guardians in the winter of 1894 the recently elected Catholic Mrs.Sale "asserted that the men outside had been compelled to join the procession by force and bribery."[50] However, this did not preclude a Catholic possessing reforming zeal. One year after her election Mrs.Sale and Mrs.Pankhurst, the wife of the ILP leader, were campaigning in harness to uncover corruption and unnecessary hardship in workhouses.[51]

---

[46] Harvest, March 1901.

[47] Harvest, May 1897.

[48] Harvest, March 1923.

[49] MG, 18th October 1900.

[50] Pankhurst, Suffragette Movement, p.130.

[51] Pankhurst, Suffragette Movement, p.131.

In the years immediately after 1918 the Labour party and the Church pragmatically avoided unnecessary conflict in Board elections. The only Catholic candidate in Hulme ward for 1919 was, for example, endorsed by the area's parish priest, Labour party and Irish club.[52] Until 1926 Labour and the Church had what was described as an 'entente cordiale' in Central ward which contained fourteen Catholic parishes, including St.Patrick's. Labour did not stand against Catholics whilst they, in turn, generally supported the party's proposals. Polarisation occurred in 1926 possibly as a consequence of Bourne's opposition to the General Strike or because of the support some Catholic representatives gave to the deduction of ten shillings from the amount of outdoor relief given to strikers' families.[53] However, in spite of their new Labour opponents all three Catholic candidates were returned that year and the next.[54] Catholics still generally registered a preference for their Church in such elections.

4. The Church and Nationalism.

The Catholic faith was extensively mobilised by Nationalists to improve Irish support for Home Rule. The question of Irish independence was an issue on which the hierarchy of the English Church was largely at odds with its mainly Irish adherents. Nevertheless, it was in the interests of neither Nationalist or Bishop to pursue the matter: for most of the pre-1914 period Irish Nationalists and English Catholics uneasily co-existed. However,

---

[52] MCH, 29th March, 5th April 1919.

[53] MCH, 22nd May 1926.

[54] MCH, 20th March 1926, 2nd April 1927.

beneath the usually calm surface ran feelings of mistrust. These were expressed in 1899 when angry Nationalists demonstrated against the Bishop of Salford when they thought that Father McCarthy of St.James, Pendleton had been removed from the diocese because Bilsborrow had disapproved of McCarthy blessing the Manchester Martyrs' memorial at Moston cemetery.[55]

Throughout the diaspora Catholic education was the most disruptive of issues to confront Irish politicians, placing them in opposition to their radical allies.[56] This dilemma was most acute in Britain: when the 1906 Liberal government attempted to overturn the 1902 Education Act Nationalist-hierarchy conflict surfaced in the full light of day. The Church's attempts to resist the government forced Irish Catholics to make a stark choice: they either voted for the Conservatives and the defence of Catholic schools or for the Liberal and Home Rule: would it be the Church or Ireland? It has already been shown what an important contribution the parish school made to the popular experience of Catholicism. As a shared institution it served not only as a central aspect of Catholic life, but also as a symbol of their separate identity. It was, therefore, not surprising that this issue divided the Nationalist movement.

Even before the Liberal landslide, divisions had appeared in the movement. Only after protracted heart-searching did the Irish in St.Michael's ward endorse the Liberal Parliamentary candidate. The Headmaster of St.Edmund's, Miles Platting, a former UIL branch official, went one step further and supported the Conservative

---

[55]MG, 28th November 1898, 13th February 1899.

[56]Maurice French, 'Roman Catholics and the Labour Party: an early conflict in South Australia', Labour History, no.32, 1978; Gilley, 'Irish diaspora', pp.202-3.

opponent.[57] Nevertheless, only after the Liberal victory did the Church fully mobilise adherents against the Liberals. In the spring of 1906 each parish held a public meeting on the matter, culminating in a demonstration at the Free Trade Hall and, in October a massive demonstration at Belle Vue.

Many Nationalist Liberals were active in this campaign. After winning such a landslide victory the Liberals, having avoided a commitment to introducing a Home Rule Bill, became uninterested in Irish affairs. Liberal inaction gave Nationalists room to express their hostility to any reform of education which harmed their Church. Many English Anglican Liberals also baulked at what was popularly seen as a Nonconformist measure. In 1907 the East Manchester Liberal Association, on which there were at least three Catholics, voted seventeen to eleven against a motion congratulating the government on its education policy.[58] Even Dan Boyle was drawn to declare that "he was now being driven from Liberalism" although not, he made clear, into the arms of the Conservatives.[59]

This short period of Irish alienation from the Liberals was brought to an end by the 1908 North-west Manchester by-election, caused by the elevation of Winston Churchill to the Presidency of the Board of Trade. Although this was a middle class division with few Catholics and less Irish - it contained no church and only the

---

[57] MCH, 5th, 9th January 1906.

[58] MCH, 1st June 1906, 19th April 1907.

[59] Holy Name Messenger, October 1907.

Thomas Davis UIL branch - it became an important test case.[60] All started well from the Catholic viewpoint when John Redmond, disappointed with the government's apathy over Home Rule, declared that he could not ask Irishmen to vote for Churchill.[61] Following this statement, the Thomas Davis branch and the Catholic Federation held a meeting at which it was decided to issue a joint message to the electorate.[62] The UIL branch held two separate meetings after this decision, but twice baulked at the prospect of endorsing the Conservative and failed to make a choice.[63]

Matters were eventually dictated by the seven Catholic priests, part of whose parishes were found within the division. Willfully ignoring the UIL-CF compact they unilaterally issued a manifesto which calling on Catholics to oppose Churchill. This appeal, in the words of one Liberal worker "struck terror to the hearts of all erring Catholics."[64] Probably put under some pressure to follow the priests' lead and possibly confident that the UIL would not back Churchill, the CF abandoned their earlier agreement and also came out against the Liberals. Unfortunately, Nationalist leaders meeting in Dublin overturned Redmond's earlier promise and came out in favour of Churchill. The by-election had forced the Liberal candidate to make a number of concessions on Home Rule and it was felt that on both Ireland and Catholic education Churchill deserved

---

[60]The Thomas Davis branch, as already mentioned, was the city centre club for richer Irishmen and contained such worthies as Boyle and McCabe.

[61]MG, 16th April 1908.

[62]MCH, 18th April 1908.

[63]MG, 18th April 1908.

[64]MG, 20th, 30th April 1908.

Irish support. Manchester's Nationalists quickly followed Dublin's lead and went into the fray, although the decision had been made so late they only had two days campaigning before voting. Nevertheless, McCabe and Boyle addressed large numbers of meetings and called upon all Irishmen to vote Liberal.[65]

It would be very rash to account for Churchill's defeat by simply pointing to the supposed defection of the Catholic vote. Admittedly partial estimates suggested that between 25 per cent and 100 per cent of Catholics switched their vote, the scale of the swing away from the Liberals since 1906 suggests that other factors were also at work.[66] Nevertheless, like many other by-elections, the contest concentrated energies and emotions to an extent greater than was justified. The consequences were also traumatic for the Nationalist-Catholic relationship, which was left in tatters for the remainder of the pre-1914 period. Moreover, as the Manchester Catholic Herald pointed out, it had not been a simple Irish versus Catholic battle: the Irish were found on both sides, something which probably accounts for the bitterness of hostilitie.[67] Five members of the Poland Street UIL branch committee were suspended after canvassing for the Conservative.[68] In at least one parish division was also deep. James Monaghan, a former Sunday school teacher and out-of-door collector supported Churchill, whereas a number of his co-religionists voted Conservative. They refused to associate with

---

[65] MCH, 25th April 1908; MG, 22nd, 23rd April 1908.

[66] MG, 28th, 29th, 30th April 1908.

[67] MCH, 16th May 1908.

[68] MCH, 13th June 1908.

him, describing Monaghan as an "Irish renegade" and a "milk-and-water Catholic".[69] Both Boyle and McCabe attempted to prevent a deeper rift with the Church and disingenuously singled out for attack, not the Bishop nor the priests' intervention, but that of the Catholic Federation which had, after all, only followed clerical direction.[70]

These positions remained entrenched and were, in fact, reinforced during the General Election of January 1910. For this contest the Liberals had placed Home Rule on the agenda for the first time in nearly twenty years. The Church, however, continued to call on Catholics to vote against the Liberals and Labour. With so much at stake for both sides passions were understandably high and only the intervention of Nationalist leaders prevented angry Irishmen discontinuing financial support of a number of the city's parishes.[71] In the aftermath of this election an incident occurred which gives yet another insight into the depth of antagonism between leading protagonists. Father Sassen of St.Brigid's asked Dan McCabe not to attend a branch meeting of the St.Joseph's Missionary Society of which McCabe was a vice president. In spite of this he, along with a number of supporters, went to the meeting and in an atmosphere of "suppressed excitement" confronted the priest. Sassen complained that McCabe had endorsed the Labour candidate for East Manchester after he had failed to give an adequate answer to the Bishops' Test Question. It was, therefore, "very anomalous on your part to come and speak on behalf of foreign missions when you can't

---

[69] MCH, 30th May 1908.

[70] MCH, 23rd, 30th May 1908.

[71] MCH, 29th January 1910.

be obedient to your own Bishops in your own country." During the following uproar Sassen was informed that his attitude was an insult to all Irishmen.[72] The city's Nationalists united behind McCabe: he even won the support of the UIL branch in Sassen's own parish. In a number of Manchester's parishes a number of Irish Catholics withdrew from lay activity in protest against priests whose attitudes echoed those of Sassen.[73]

Not all priests were so intransigent, however, and some felt, unlike the hierarchy, that the interests of Catholic schools were best served by Irish Nationalists in Parliament.[74] By December 1910 the Bishops did not feel it necessary to produce a Test Question for candidates as the Liberals were preoccupied with matters even more important than denominational education.[75] The old Catholic-Nationalist relationship was quickly reestablished. In the November municipal elections of that year Charles Egan the Liberal Nationalist candidate for St.Michael's ward was supported by Dean Hennessy of St.Patrick's and three priests from St.William's.[76] Such had been the improvement by 1911 that Liberals and Catholics from St.Wilfrid's ran candidates jointly under the 'Progressive' banner in the Board of Guardians election.[77]

---

[72] MCH, 5th March 1910.

[73] MCH, 12th March 1910.

[74] MCH, 16th, 30th April 1910.

[75] MCH, 26th November 1910.

[76] MCH, 22nd, 29th October 1910.

[77] St.Wilfrid's Parish Magazine, March 1911.

Animosity, nevertheless, continued to exist between Nationalists and the CF, which still enjoyed Bishop Casartelli's full support. Whereas Nationalists saw the Federation as unquestioningly Tory leading members of the Federation were inclined to view Nationalists as enemies of the Church. It is difficult to disentangle personal reasons for this continued hostility, particularly the mutual feelings of loathing between Dan McCabe and Thomas Burns the Federation's organising secretary. In 1917 Burns rather churlishly wrote of McCabe's Lord Mayoralty, seen by most other Catholics as a triumph for their religion's prestige, as

> naturally a blow to the Federation, and he has consistently exerted his great influence [...] to the detriment of the Federation.[78]

5. Conclusion.

Many Catholics did not accept much of the Catholic Church's social teaching as the Church itself understood it: social position and national origin influenced acceptance and interpretation. This teaching was, in any case, quite generous and lax. It was, therefore, possible for English aristocrats to be Conservatives, Irish provisions dealers to be Liberals and Irish trade unionists to be Labourists. As has been suggested the ideological effect was much less impressive than when the Church wished to defend its interests in education or was clearly threatened by particular political measures. Even then, however, Irish nationality sometimes confused the picture.

---

[78] 'Observations by the Organisation Secretary on the condition of the Federation', dated 4th January 1917, Folder No.4, Catholic Federation File, WH.

Chapter Eleven. Labour and the Church, 1906-1939.

1. Introduction.

The creation of the Irish Free State in 1922 raised expectations within the English Catholic Church that they had entered a new era: no longer would Catholics be divided by politics, no more would Irish national considerations hamper attempts to defend the English Church's interests.[1] However, Irish Catholics were staunch Labour voters after 1918 precisely because of the party's earlier support for Irish independence. The Church, therefore, continued to be faced with a familiar problem: that the party supported by a majority of Catholics contained many of those most hostile to Catholicism. In this sense Labour had simply replaced the Liberals.

Two divergent Catholic strategies which emerged prior to 1914 attempted to take account of the rise of Labour. The first was the preference of a minority mainly composed of English Catholics. They considered it futile to work within a party so dominated by 'socialists'. Their opinion became more firm when Labour adopted its February 1918 constitution. They wanted to replace Labour with a non-denominational alternative based on the model of European Christian Democrat parties. Labour, however, contained a significant number of Irish Catholics who advocated a second strategy, that of 'permeation'. Although members of the party they refused to accept policy which they felt threatened the position of Catholics. Consequently, both before and after 1914 this group attempted to uphold the policies and interests of their Church within Labour's ranks. This chapter describes the number of conflicts which

---

[1] CF, January 1922.

punctuated the Labour-Catholic relationship.

2. The character of Labour.

It has already been noted how Taff Vale transformed Labour politics in the early 1900s by making trade unionists aware of the need for direct and independent representation in Parliament. The LRC, an alliance of socialists, radicals, Lib-Labs and trade unionists of no particular affiliation were all united on one point, if only one: the defence of trade unionism. The First World War and the demise of Liberalism propelled Labour from being not much more than a pressure group to a party of government which in 1924 it duly became. Nevertheless, this transformation did not entail the party, particularly locally, assuming a homogeneous character. In Manchester, it remained the arena for a great variety of thoughts, means and ambitions. Within this coalition of various elements stood a large number of Irish Catholics, forming a distinct strand within the party. St.Michael's ward, a Labour bastion after 1918, returned the only two publicans to sit with the Council's Labour group.[2] As a whole Irish members were not on the party's left. The city's Catholics failed to produce any socialists of the stature of Glasgow's John Wheatley.[3] This probably had much to do with the

---

[2]Tom Regan, 'Labour members of Manchester City Council 1895-1963', BRF/352/04273/RE1, MAD.

[3]For the significance of Wheatley's career Sheridan Gilley, 'Catholics and socialists in Glasgow, 1906-12', in Lunn, Immigrants and Minorities; David Howell, A Lost Left. Three Studies in Socialism and Nationalism, (Manchester, 1986), pp.229-80.

different character of each cities' labour movement. As Joan Smith has argued, Glasgow's pre-1914 Labour politics were infused with a strong Radical impulse expressed by a well-supported Independent Labour Party (ILP).[4] In contrast, working class Conservatism and pragmatic trade unionism held sway for much of the pre-War period in Manchester. Unions consequently saw Labour in instrumental terms, a tendency which was reflected in many of the arguments deployed by the Catholic Federation, as will be shown below. Therefore, Catholics in the city active in trade unions and the Labour party were able to remain loyal to their Church without much heart-searching about 'socialism'. Only a minority retained their doubts. Following on from this battles between the Church and Labour were fought within the party's local branches and took the form of intra-party disputes.

The real challenge to the Church came not from the number of renegade Catholic Labour members, as some clerics feared, but from those non-Catholics over whom it had no influence. When Labour fully annexed the Irish vote after the First World War it also contained a significant number of socialists and secularists. They saw in all forms of religion an impediment to social and intellectual progress and consequently viewed the Church with a fierce hatred.[5] Ironically, many of these activists would also have been 'friends of Ireland'. Although the ILP was prominent in post-1918 campaigns to

---

[4]Smith, 'Labour tradition', pp.34-7.

[5]Roberts, Ragged Schooling, pp.172-3. This hostility to the influence of organised religion finds a parallel in the life of many working class autodidacts of the early nineteenth century who attempted to destroy, what was then, the powerful influence of popular superstition. See David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom. A Study of Nineteenth Century Working Class Autobiography (1981), pp.168-9.

secure Irish independence many members held a number of hostile opinions about the Church. In 1910 the Labour Leader described it as "a church which associates itself with drink merchants, land thieves, war-mongers, and tariff jugglers."[6] Within Labour's ranks were also found feminists and modernisers who wished to transform traditional moral conduct, a project which brought them into headlong confrontation with the Catholic Church. There were also a number of members - although never a majority - with strong sympathies for Marxism, the Communist party and the Russian Revolution.[7]

The battle lines between these groups and Catholics might not have been so starkly drawn as they were in Liverpool, but they were nevertheless strongly evident.[8] One member of South Salford Labour Party Women's Section recalled skirmishes during the 1920s between those who advocated birth control and the many Catholics "who just followed what the priest said." She, along with some more advanced colleagues, heckled a Catholic demonstration against the establishment of a birth control clinic in Greengate.[9] Similar conflicts were also fought out in near-by Nelson's Women's

---

[6]LL, 14th January 1910.

[7]Robert Garner, 'Local Labour parties in Manchester and Salford and the Communist Question in the 1920s', Manchester Region History Review, vol.ii, no.1.

[8]R.Baxter, The Liverpool Labour Party, 1918-63, 2 vols, unpublished D.Phil, Oxford University, 1969, vol ii, pp.211-13.

[9]MS, tape 774(2).

Cooperative Guild.[10] Members of the ILP were particularly associated with this type of activity and in 1930 the Manchester Catholic Herald went so far as to suggest that its policy on the provision of birth control would "extend immorality among the unmarried" and called on all Catholics to leave the party.[11]

In 1925 Labour councillors Reilly and Cassidy of St.Michael's, Lundy of Harpurhey and representatives from Liverpool met at Shamrock Hall, Ancoats - the club rooms of the old Michael Davitt UIL branch - to discuss their shared fears about the party's direction. They saw the continued growth of "aesthetic Socialism and Communism" threatening the fibre of Catholic life. The Herald summarised their thoughts on Labour clubs, to which many young Irish Catholics belonged

> the atmosphere of some of these establishments is proving to be inimical to their religious and moral welfare. Discussions take place, in which such proposals as easy divorce and state guardianship of children are strongly supported by extremists who frankly admit that they regard the Scriptures as a fairy tale. Birth control is also lauded, and pamphlets dealing with this distasteful subject as well as sexual matters are openly sold.[12]

The meeting concluded with the formation of the Irish Democratic League (IDL)

> a body Catholic in tone, that would be affiliated to the Labour Party and prepared to cooperate with it on all matters not prejudicial to religion or Irish nationality.[13]

---

[10]When Selina Cooper tried to discus birth control, Catholic women protested. In 1923 a pro-Labour Independent Irish councillor refused to support Cooper in a municipal contest because of her advocacy of contraception. Jill Liddington, The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel, Selina Cooper (1864-1946), (1984), p.325, 335.

[11]MCH, 24th April 1930.

[12]MCH, 16th May 1925.

[13]MCH, 16th May 1925.

As the result of a quarrel with Labour the IDL put up a candidate in St.Michael's ward to stand against both the Conservative and official Labour candidate, Downey, described in advertising as "The only Official Labour Candidate of Pure Irish Birth". The IDL candidate, James Hoy, a beer retailer gained 965 votes (just over 22 per cent of the total) in a contest which Labour with 39 per cent lost by just 25 votes. This was only one of two Labour defeats in the ward between 1919 and 1938. The nature of the IDL's feud with Labour has remained obscure but it had clearly been resolved by 1928 when the victorious Conservative stood for re-election. Labour won the ward by 937 votes significantly almost exactly the same number gained by Hoy three years earlier.[14] Although the League does not appear to have developed very much further after 1925 it obviously echoed some of the concerns of Labour's Catholic members for the St.Michael's branch continued in existence till at least 1932.[15]

If many Catholic Labour members were concerned with socialism, both politically and culturally, then many socialists within the party were equally preoccupied with their own activities. Their Church was seen as a stalking horse for reaction. A.A.Munro, a former chairman of Manchester Trades Council, made headline news in the Manchester Catholic Herald when he attacked church schools at the Manchester County Forum. He saw them as an impediment to "real education." To Labour and Communist applause he described the

---

[14]MCH, 31st October, 7th November 1925; MG, 2nd November 1928.

[15]The national IDL was formed in 1923 on the ruins of the UIL by some of its former members, including T.P.O'Connor. It seems to have led a very shadowy existence thereafter. M.McDermott, Irish Catholics and the British Labour Movement: a Study with Particular Reference to London, 1918-1970, unpublished M.A., University of Kent, 1979, pp.71-2; MCH, 12th November 1932.

Catholic church as an "instrument of capitalism" that had to be destroyed. He went on that "the man who was a Catholic first, an Irishman second and a Labour man last ought to be given his marching orders."[16] This was part of a prevalent feeling amongst many Labour members that the churches, among other bodies, were purveyors of a 'bourgeois ideology'.[17] Members of the Communist party came to think of Catholics as the least politically aware and most illiterate section of the British working class.[18] Communism's strongholds in Manchester, as in other large cities, lay amongst skilled workers and not Catholics, especially not those of immediate Irish origin.[19] Mistrust of the Church and its adherents was not limited to Labour's left, as those who wished to maintain a united organisation also saw it as a disruptive element. One prominent local member feared that "Catholics entered the Labour Party for their own ends" and called on them to "subordinate their religious feelings in the interest of the Labour movement."[20] By no means all Labour's Catholic members were immune to such appeals; some declined to put their faith before party.[21] As shown below, even those willing to defend their Church's

---

[16]MCH, 12th January 1935.

[17]Stuart MacIntyre, 'British Labour, Marxism and working class apathy in the nineteen twenties', Historical Journal, vol.xx, 2, 1977, pp.480-1.

[18]Douglas Hyde, I Believed. The Autobiography of a Former British Communist, (1952), pp.279-80.

[19]Raphael Samuel, 'Class politics: the lost world of British Communism. Part Three', New Left Review, no.165, 1987, pp.70-83.

[20]MCH, 2nd February 1929.

[21]Tom Regan, councillor for Gorton North agreed with view, MCH, 4th October 1930.

interests within the party only went so far - few, if any, crossed the border and joined a political rival. Labour loyalties remained strong amongst Catholic members, even during times of conflict.

3. The Catholic Federation.

Those tensions evident between many Catholic and non-Catholic members of the Labour party had previously emerged before 1914. The Catholic Federation was an expression of the distrust felt by some working class Catholics. The Federation was almost unique to the Salford diocese, as it failed to prosper outside industrial Lancashire. Moreover, its two decade existence, from 1906 to 1929, highlights the strengths and weaknesses of Catholics when they attempted to influence the labour movement. Established amidst the fierce arguments over Catholic schools, it initially attracted a substantial number of skilled Catholic working men eager to defend their Church's interests within their union and party. However, the Federation's leaders became increasingly hostile to Labour and after the adoption of the 1918 constitution called on all Catholics to leave the party. Some attempted to create an alternative to Labour in the shape of the Centre Labour Party. This section will examine the course of the Federation's development, who it attracted and account for its eventual failure to establish itself as a popular political force amongst Manchester's Catholic population.

During late 1905 and early 1906 a series of meetings drew together a number of Catholic trade unionists from the Salford diocese to discuss the implications of the TUC's and LRC's support for secular education. Their precise object was to organise

co-religionists within the labour movement and overturn the policy.[22] More generally they hoped to blunt the wider impact of 'socialism' on Labour and the unions. To this end it was decided to form a separate organisation for Catholic trade unionists. Before initiating any definite form of action, however, these unionists deferred to the judgement of Bishop Casartelli who was very keen to support the initiative and became the Federation's enthusiastic head.[23]

It is clear from the biographical details of four of the Federation's principals that the original cadre was strongly committed to both the trade union movement and the Catholic Church.[24] They were skilled or white collar workers, branch secretaries and Trade Council delegates also active in parish life. Henry Campbell, the founder, was a member of both the Amalgamated Society of Engineers (ASE) and the National Union of Life Assurance Agents as well as of Gorton Trade Council. When a child he had been an altar boy and as an adult served as sacristan and Sunday school teacher at St.Francis'.[25] Edmund Riley, chairman of the CF, was a skilled cabinet maker and branch secretary of the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association (NAFTA) and Trade Council delegate. He lived in Livesey Street on which also lay St.Patrick's church in a home described as "like a wayside chapel breathing true Catholic

---

[22]On the origins and reasons for support for secular education in the labour movement, see Clive Griggs, 'Labour and education', in Brown, First Labour Party.

[23]Harvest, August 1906, May 1907.

[24]This should not be suprising; Hobsbawm has pointed to the strong attachment of labour cadres to ideolgies, religious or otherwise in Primitive Rebels (Manchester, 1971), p.142.

[25]MCH, 15th February 1908; Harvest, March 1908.

devotion and prayerful service."[26] Thomas Burns, organising secretary and leading light of the CF for most of its existence, was a member of the Railway Clerks' Association (RCA) and was also active in a number of confraternities at the Holy Name. James Berrel, chairman of the Manchester CF's Trade Union sub-committee, member of the ASE and St.Anne's, Ancoats, was another long-serving branch secretary and Trade Council delegate. In 1906 he was one of J.R.Clynes' nominees in North-east Manchester.[27]

The Federation's attitude to Labour can possibly be traced to the leadership's membership of particular trade unions. Both the ASE and NAFTA were skilled unions, whose respective industries were undergoing a transformation which made skill increasingly unnecessary. The ASE's traumatic strike of 1897-8 was a response to the employers' attempt at dilution and its eventual defeat made it more amenable to some kind of representation in Parliament.[28] NAFTA's membership voted six to one to affiliate to Labour in the wake of the engineers' great strike, taking to heart the implications of that struggle.[29] The RCA was in a different position. Never having had any industrial power the union required Parliamentary representation to gain the most modest improvements in working conditions.[30] Labour was therefore seen as a necessary part of a trade union's weaponry and so long as the party remained true to

---

[26]Federationist, August 1911.

[27]MCH, 14th March 1908.

[28]James B.Jeffreys, The Story of the Engineers 1800-1945 (1970), pp.150-73.

[29]Hew Reid, The Furniture Workers - From Craft to Industrial Union, 1865-1972, unpublished Ph.D., University of Warwick, 1982, pp.78-86.

[30]David Lockwood, The Blackcoated Worker, (1966), pp.151-6.

that role it was considered legitimate. However, once it strayed into non-industrial areas and confronted issues of importance to the Catholic Church Labour was severely criticised. Moreover, it should be emphasised that in the mistrust of Labour Catholics were not unique amongst trade unionists, especially in Lancashire before 1914.[31]

These were men conscious of their identity both as Catholics and trade unionists. The CF had its own Trade Union sub-committee and was also a driving force behind the National Conference of Catholic Trade Unionists (NCCTU). Some of the strength of the distinct nature of this identity was revealed when, at a meeting of Catholic trade unionists at St.Augustine's in 1907, participants complained at the presence of employers.[32] Moreover, it was probably their experience as trade unionists which informed the CF's attempt to introduce democracy into the Church.[33]

The tension between the strategies of permeation and rejection was felt early in the life of the CF. The most striking expression of this occurred in the spring of 1908 when both the executive and a general meeting of James Berrell's branch of the ASE in Ancoats voted to disaffiliate from the LRC. This was

> a protest against the policy of the LRC in dealing with the question of Religious Education instead of keeping to matters relating to Labour.

---

[31]Chris Wrigley, 'Labour and the trade unions', in Brown, First Labour Party, p.129, 136-7, 152.

[32]MCH, 15th February 1907.

[33]MCH, 10th May 1907; CF, May 1919.

Although the motion had been proposed by another Catholic it appealed to those of any religion and was supported by a majority mainly formed by Anglicans. Berrell's opinion was that most delegates to the LRC were "extreme socialists" so, he concluded, there was no point staying on the Committee as Catholics would always be voted down. Many other Catholic trade unionists disagreed, however, and suggested that withdrawl only further weakened the hand of remaining Catholics.[34] Those of that opinion could point to the success of their strategy as internal pressure did produce some results. In 1906 Clynes was a staunch advocate of the principle that public money meant public control and also supported secular education. By 1907 overt Catholic pressure had forced him into suggesting that, although still supporting these measures he thought it too early to implement them.[35] The secular education motion was also eventually removed from discussion at the 1912 TUC Conference.[36]

Labour's adoption of a new constitution in 1918 enshrining its commitment to "the reconstruction of society upon the basis of common ownership of the means of production" provoked a fundamental transformation in the attitude of the CF to the party. Burns and others felt that this meant that Labour had become fully 'socialist' rather than a party which included a number of socialists. It appears that the majority of Catholic trade unionists and even the hierarchy itself disagreed with this interpretation. In April 1918 the NCCTU standing committee proposed the formation of a Christian

---

[34]This account based on MCH, 14th, 21st March, 14th April 1908.

[35]MCH, 27th April 1906, 5th October 1907.

[36]Brian Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920 (1974), pp.277-8.

Democrat Party with a programme similar to that of the "late Labour Party, but excluding the Collectivist or Socialist formula."[37] By July it had called upon the TUC to form such a party.[38] However the TUC, perhaps not surprisingly, failed to respond to their request. It was also clear that the hierarchy was unwilling to back the formation of a separate party so the NCCTU conference was merely asked to pass a motion which called on Catholic unionists not to pay their levy to Labour.[39] It is unlikely that many even took this step. When members of the CF within the diocese were balloted on the issue of Labour's constitution of the minority who bothered to vote an overwhelming number either thought that the party was still not 'socialist' or felt that it didn't much matter. There was, therefore, little support for a new 'Christian Democrat' style party.[40]

In spite of such discouraging news, and without consulting his Bishop, Burns established the Centre Labour Party (CLP) in Manchester in September 1918.[41] The party aimed to become the "political expression of the needs of the Workers" positioned between "Capitalism and Socialistic excesses". It retained an

---

[37]NCCTU standing committee to Casartelli, 4th April 1918, item 4, Folder 2, Catholic Federation File, WH.

[38]Agenda for NCCTU special conference, July 1918, item 5, Folder 2, CF File, WH.

[39]Preliminary agenda, NCCTU conference, November 1918, item 6, Folder 2, CF File, WH.

[40]Statement on the ballot, undated, item 3, Folder 2, CF File.

[41]Burns to Casartelli, 23rd September 1918, item 7, CF File, Folder 4. Relations between the two men seemed to degenerate during this period, as Burns became increasingly frustrated with what he saw as the Hierarchy's inaction on the question of the Labour party, Burns to Casartelli, 25th April and 15th May 1919, items 8 and 9, Folder 4, CF File, WH.

identity with the trade union movement: those who refused to become members of a relevant trade union were not allowed to join the party, whilst policy was to be formed "with due regard" to the TUC. Its founding thesis was that as Labour had became a Socialist Party, the CLP could appeal to all non-socialist trade unionists whatever their religion. The party supported the dispersal of the means of production to as many people as possible, "expedient" nationalisation, religious liberty and continued denominational education.[42]

The CLP's life appears to have been brief and inglorious. Apart from Manchester only one more branch was ever established, that being in Blackburn. Only one CLP candidate ever stood for election, in Gorton North in 1919, where she attracted just under 25 per cent of the vote and lost to Labour in a two-cornered contest. Quite obviously the CLP didn't have enough support in areas of greatest Catholic numbers, such as Ancoats, to merit standing a candidate. The party did not, as Burns had hoped, replace Labour as the representative of Catholic workers let alone the organised working class as a whole. Whilst many trade unionists took the Labour connection for granted, it would have appeared perverse to break it. The CF continued in existence throughout the 1920s, churlishly referring to Labour only as the "Socialist Party". It had, however, completely cut itself off from the party and increasingly turned its attentions towards questions of public 'morality'. Consequently, it was a spent political force, unable as it was to mobilise Catholics within the labour movement to defend the interests of their Church.

---

[42]CLP manifesto, WH; MG, 24th September 1918.

The Federation, although many of its original members were trade unionists, failed to win over a large enough number to form a stable trade union base. In many parishes there were never enough unionists to warrant the formation of a trade union sub-committee.[43] This is confirmed by a cursory glance at the occupations of those who put themselves forward as speakers for the Federation in the years prior to 1914. Among the few whose occupations could be traced were two clerks, two teachers, a salesman, shopkeeper, tea dealer, wire merchant and a wharehouseman. This was a predominantly lower middle class group.[44] In 1921 membership, 40 per cent of which was concentrated in only four parishes, peaked at 6,129 in 1921, barely 6 per cent of the total Catholic population.[45] Formed in the midst of a heated confrontation between the Church and the Liberals over denominational education it found it difficult to expand membership or increase interest by raising other matters.[46] Nor did its 'neutrality' on Home Rule, which was seen by many Irish as outright opposition, help matters. It was no accident that the Federation was very weak in the Irish stronghold of St.Patrick's where it could only attract a membership of 128 in 1908.[47] It was only popular when the Church was under attack - there were few working class Catholics who saw 'socialism' in the abstract as much to worry about. Only when part of their culture seemed to be under threat could ordinary Catholics be mobilised. By calling on Catholics to reject Labour

---

[43] CF, December 1918, January 1919.

[44] Derived from Slater's Street Directory (1909).

[45] Appendix 9, Tables 1 and 2.

[46] CF, October 1922.

[47] Appendix 9, Table 1.

after 1918 the CF found itself in the dilemma faced by the Gaelic League which wanted the Irish to turn their backs on all aspects of Manchester working class culture. Catholics were willing to permeate Labour and fight within the party for their Church. However, as with Irish nationality, they were not willing to put their Church before everything.

4. Party versus Church.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s Catholics within Labour's ranks arose in revolt against their party throughout Lancashire. Apart from Manchester Ashton-under-Lyne, Chorley, Liverpool, Rawtenstall and Swinton all suffered intra-party disputes which took as their root the competitive nature of Labour and Catholic loyalties. Aggravating these local outbursts was the national question of voluntary education which the Labour party, albeit very reluctantly, addressed during its second government of 1929-31.

During this period there were two distinct, but inter-related, episodes which highlighted the stresses and strains within the Manchester party. The first conflict was provoked in 1928 when the City Council voted 48-43 to endorse the Education Committee's refusal to allow the new Catholic school of St.Roberts', Longsight to teach children over the age of eleven. This was a consequence of the Committee's advocacy of the 1926 Hadow Report's recommendation that such children should be educated in centralised secondary schools. Such a policy cut across the Catholic Church's desire to

educate all of its charges within parish schools.[48] Nevertheless, although the national Labour party supported Hadow's general implications on the St.Robert's issue the Council's Labour group was "almost equally divided."[49]

As one of its last acts before disbanding the Catholic Federation called on Catholics to vote against those councillors standing in the local elections of 1928 who had voted with the Education Committee.[50] Five 'non-political' meetings were held during the campaign to advocate the Catholic case, at one of which spoke Harpurheys's second generation Irish Labour councillor Richard Lundy.[51] This was held in New Cross ward where stood Thomas Larrad the chairman of Manchester Borough Labour Party, especially prominent in the campaign against St.Robert's. Larrad lost, his 1925 majority of 248 having been converted into a deficit of 479 votes. His defeat was widely blamed on the action of Catholics and, in particular, on Lundy's speech which was held to be anti-Labour.[52] The St.Robert's affair may have had wider repercussions for Labour's results throughout the city were very bad for that year and somewhat out of step with the rest of the region. As a punishment for his

---

[48]For the background to this conflict see D.Barber, School Accomodation Problems in Manchester, 1919-39, unpublished M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1960, pp.100-101, 107, 114, 136; Rodney Barker, Education and Politics 1900-1951. A Study of the Labour Party (Oxford, 1972), pp.57-8.

[49]Labour Party National Executive [hereafter LPNEC], minutes, 20th March 1929; MCH, 27th October 1928.

[50]MCN, 27th October 1928; MCH, 3rd November 1928.

[51]MCH, 19th July 1930.

[52]MG, 2nd November 1928; Labour's Northern Voice [hereafter LNV], 9th November 1928.

speech a large majority of the Borough party voted to expel Lundy.[53] Although Councillor Thomas Cassidy of St.Michael's had also spoken at a similar Catholic meeting at St.Augustine's, All Saints action was not taken against him very probably because the Labour candidate won.[54] Lundy, however, was unanimously supported by his divisional association in Platting where Catholics would have sat in considerable numbers.[55] The party's National Executive Committee (NEC), with an election in prospect, felt it necessary to intervene in the matter and appointed Herbert Morrison and George Lansbury to find a settlement.[56]

Compromise on this subject was not easily found. As a series of articles in Labour's Northern Voice revealed, many members of the Labour party felt as strongly about the St.Robert's issue as did the Catholic Church. The standard of education for all children was ultimately at issue for some of the Church's opponents. If the Education Committee had passed what they felt to have been an inadequate plan it would have set a very low level for others to emulate. It would have been a waste of public money on a "scandalously inferior school, unworthy of Catholics or any other Manchester children." To these 'rational' arguments, it was said, the Catholic authorities replied by "arousing religious prejudice and applying political intimidation."[57]

---

[53]The vote was 83-28, MCH, 12th January 1929.

[54]Nor was the defeated candidate so prestigious, MCH, 19th January 1929.

[55]MCH, 2nd February 1929.

[56]LPNEC minutes, 17th February 1929.

[57]LNV, 23rd, 30th November 1928.

Reactions were mixed amongst the Northern Voice's readership. Whilst one correspondent seemed genuinely puzzled by the Catholics' intractable position another stridently denied the right of parents to choose their children's school. He was exceeded in his zeal by another correspondent who refuted the notion that parents had any right to "pollute" the minds of their children with religious "folk-lore". To counter this criticism two Labour members from St.Robert's parish contributed to the debate by describing the hardship endured by Catholics in a parish where Mass was delivered in a former cobbler's shop. They clung to the 'right' to educate their children as best they could, even if this meant inferior Catholic schools.

> We propose to build a school where our children might be instructed and trained in wholesome surroundings, under the best of conditions, to take their place in the life of the world here and hereafter. Is there anything wrong in that?

In the same issue another Catholic stated that he had sent all of his eight children to a Catholic school and they hadn't suffered. Council schools on the other hand, he suggested, were both "god-less" and productive of criminals.[58] Such attitudes allowed for little common ground.

The NEC vainly attempted to bridge the gap between protagonists. Whilst it accepted the Borough party's case, i.e. that Lundy's speech had been intended to prejudice Larrad's chances, it was willing to support his re-admittence if he undertook not to repeat his action.[59] However, backed by the Platting party's secretary and agent Lundy was unwilling to make such a promise. Although asserting

---

[58] LNV, 7th, 14th December 1928.

[59] LPNEC minutes, 11th March 1929.

his "loyalty" and "devotion" to the Labour movement he claimed

> the right, as a Catholic, not only to state, but to work for, the point of view which Catholics hold in regard to educational affairs.[60]

The Borough party, in any case, rejected the NEC's compromise by a larger majority than had initially voted for Lundy's expulsion.[61] In an attempt to break the stalemate the Executive sent a delegation to Manchester, but it was still unable to arrive at a solution either before or after the 1929 election.[62]

Although Catholic education did not dominate the General Election of that year it was a sufficiently disruptive issue for MacDonald to recommend, after leading a committee on the matter, that Labour candidates remain uncommitted.[63] The issue in hand was whether voluntary schools should receive increased aid if the Hadow Report's proposed raising of the school leaving age from fourteen to fifteen was implemented by a future government. The party was known to support raising the leaving age, but increased aid was somewhat in doubt. On this point Labour, whose educational policies were in other areas broadly similar to those of the Conservatives, had the support of a large number of educationalists. The national party was not motivated by a hostility to religious bodies nor by an adherence

---

[60] LPNEC minutes, 20th March 1929.

[61] The vote was 109-22, MCH, 13th April 1929.

[62] LPNEC minutes, 26th March, 5th June, 24th July 1929; MCH, 4th, 11th May 1929.

[63] LPNEC minutes, 19th December 1928, 17th, 20th February 1929.

to what the Church would have called 'socialism'.[64] Despite this, members of the Holy Name church were, albeit rather eliptically, directed to vote Conservative.[65]

It is not evident that many Catholics decided against Labour on the basis of education. The Manchester Catholic Herald put three of its top six "vital issues" as "our Catholic schools", "the dangers of birth control" and "the danger of socialism", issues which could only but be directed against Labour.[66] Nevertheless, when readers were encouraged to send postcards to the paper to outline their reasons for voting for a particular party it was apparent that many still considered Catholic schools 'safe' with Labour. Although some said they chose the Conservatives feeling that only they guaranteed denominational education, a significant number of correspondents didn't vote for them, or the Liberals, because of their past record on Ireland.[67] This confidence in Labour was possibly due to the fact that many of the party's candidates with a significant proportion of Catholic constituents, contrary to MacDonald's instruction, committed themselves to protecting the interests of the Church in

---

[64]Barker, Education, pp.55-6, 57-8.

[65]Holy Name Messenger, February, June 1929.

[66]MCH, 18th May 1929.

[67]MCH, 13th, 20th July 1929.

education.[68] J.R.Clynes in particular, in whose Platting division Lundy had so much support, felt it necessary to go further than his leader thought wise.[69]

As the 1929-31 Labour government tried to tackle education it became clear that they would do so only at the expense of antagonising a large number of working class Catholics. As with the Liberals in 1906 the full force of popular Catholicism was felt only after their election victory. The central plank of Catholic objections, the lack of a promise that the government would pay schools for raising the leaving age, was probably due more to the Treasury's demand for financial stringency than the President of the Board of Education's Liberalism.[70] Nevertheless, Trevelyan's refusal to allow greater expenditure without increased local authority control ominously recalled pre-1914 arguments.[71] His Bill was consequently effectively neutered by the Scurr amendment, passed by a union of Labour Catholic M.P.s and the Opposition. This delayed its implementation until proper financial provision had been made for voluntary schools.[72]

---

[68]D.W.Dean, 'The difficulties of a Labour education policy: the failure of the Trevelyan Bill, 1929-31', British Journal of Educational Studies, vol.xvii, 1969, pp.293-4.

[69]Or so claimed the Manchester Borough party, LPNEC minutes, 24th July 1929.

[70]Catholics saw in Labour's Education Bill the familiar face of Liberalism. C.P.Trevelyan was a former Liberal and Labour relied on Liberal votes in the Commons to sustain its government, Holy Name Messenger, June 1930.

[71]Dean, 'Trevelyan Bill', p.294. Trevelyan had been a junior member of the Board of Education Board during that earlier period, Barker, Education, p.48.

[72]Brian Simon, The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-40, (1974), pp.164-6.

The depth of popular Catholic feeling was shown when a demonstration, held after the Lords had rejected Trevelyan's Bill, still drew 15,000 Catholics to the Free Trade Hall.[73] As in 1906 a putative threat to Church schools increased interest in forming a distinct Catholic political presence in the city. In 1930, however, less than a year after the demise of the Catholic Federation, there was a more modest response. Initially St.Chad's Old Boys' Association was the source of this revival. Members formed a Catholic Registration Society whose aim was to canvass Catholics with the intention of creating a solid voting block to defend Church schools. By autumn of that year their initiative was followed by a number of the city's other parishes.[74]

The second of the Manchester party's internal conflicts took place as Labour's Education Bill stumbled through Parliament. It was sparked off when George Clancy, a former chairman Manchester's Irish Self-Determination League, became the Labour nominee for a Gorton ward in 1930.[75] Both Gorton Trades Council and the local party demanded that he undertook to abide by the party constitution "even when it conflicts with the church of the candidate's faith."[76] This was an obvious attempt to prevent him, like Lundy, placing his affiliation to the Catholic Church above Labour. Moreover, it contradicted the accepted practice within the party of allowing issues of 'conscience' - usually associated with religion or

---

[73] MCH, 5th July 1930.

[74] MCH, 3rd May, 26th July, 11th October 1930.

[75] Times, 26th November 1920.

[76] MCH, 4th October 1930.

temperance - to transcend those of party.[77] Rather than make the desired promise Clancy resigned. His decision was fully endorsed by the Bishop of Salford who declared that to have remained in the party under such circumstances entailed Clancy abandoning "all his convictions as to who was his spiritual leader and to take on another leader."[78]

Lundy, still outside the party, saw the Gorton undertaking as part of a wider campaign to silence Catholics within Labour's ranks, not just in relation to schools but also to birth control.[79] For certain members of the clergy, however, the issue was much more fundamental than that, as Bishop Henshaw's comments made plain. For them it was a clear question of either taking Labour's "Lenin's dope" or retaining the Church's lead.[80] Both Lundy and Clancy distanced themselves from such a position and they criticised clerical talk of establishing a new party. Lundy was particularly careful to reiterate that on all matters, apart from those issues which affected their Church, Catholics supported Labour.[81]

When Clancy stood in Openshaw as an Independent in the 1930 Council elections he appealed to all creeds and won the support of a number of Anglican clergymen, for this issue effected members of all religions. Later in the year a handful of Anglican Labour members

---

[77] D.E.McHenry, The Labour Party in Transition 1931-38, (1938), pp.216-18; Barker, Education, p.21.

[78] MG, 13th October 1930.

[79] MCH, 18th October 1930.

[80] MCH, 15th November 1930.

[81] MG, 14th October 1930; MCH, 22nd November 1930.

also resigned in protest against the party's 'atheism'.[82] This, nevertheless, remained a predominantly Catholic campaign. There were cries of "Traitor" when Clancy left a polling station and of "Down with the Catholic Church" when a priest was spotted just after casting his vote.[83] Although Labour easily beat Clancy in Openshaw, by no means a Catholic stronghold, his candidature helped widen the conflict between Catholics and their party. In both Chorley and Ashton-under-Lyne, where tensions had already been exposed, a number of Catholics who had supported Clancy's stand in Openshaw left their parties.[84]

Events in All Saints ward, Hulme echoed events elsewhere in the city. On the eve of the 1930 municipal election Patrick Casey, the ward party chairman, and D.F.McNicholl both resigned as a protest against what they took to be the Labour candidate's hostility to the Catholic Church. This defection caused much anger within the ward party. When the two defectors provocatively attended one of the Labour candidate's meetings they were set upon. Labour lost the ward when an Independent Catholic, enjoying the support of McNicholl and Casey, split the vote and let in the Conservative.[85]

The disenchantment of some Catholics with Labour was given further expression in two 1931 Parliamentary by-elections in Ardwick and Ashton-under-Lyne. It is not certain that the party's bad showing in both elections was purely due to the defection of the

---

[82] In disputes in both Manchester and Ashton, MCH, 6th December 1930.

[83] MCH, 8th November 1930; MG, 21st October 1930.

[84] MCH, 29th November 1930.

[85] London Catholic Herald [hereafter LCH], 1st, 8th November 1930.

Catholic vote, as Labour was rapidly losing general support. It is clear, however, that the Catholic Church and former party members were aligned against the party. The Ashton Labour party had already seen Catholic resignations due to the sitting M.P.'s refusal to stand by Catholic schools during the passage of the Education Bill. When this M.P. died his successor was deemed unacceptable to Labour's emigres and the party's majority of 1,400 was turned into a deficit of 3,400 in a constituency where there were said to be 4,000 Catholics.[86] In Ardwick, a constituency with a reputed 10,000 Catholics, local priests preferred the Conservative candidate over Labour. During this election D.F.McNicholl campaigned against his former party whose majority was cut from 7,000 to just 314.[87]

Although such action failed to endear Labour's Catholics to their non-Catholic colleagues talk of exiled Catholics forming a Christian Democrat party was no more than the wishful thinking of a number of anti-Labour priests.[88] This was not seen as desirable by those forced out of the party, nor did all priests see it as a proper strategy. In contrast, by no means all Catholic Labour members were eager to put their place in the party at stake. Immediately after Lundy's expulsion the Manchester Catholic Herald reported that half a dozen Catholic Labour councillors were thinking of resigning and standing as Independents. However, the prospect of a General Election was said to have made them think again. If this wasn't simply an excuse for inaction then it shows that although

---

[86]For details see MCH, 14th February, 11th, 18th, 25th April, 2nd May 1931; LNV, June 1931.

[87]See MCH, 20th, 27th June 1931.

[88]LNV, March 1931.

they were willing to make a point on behalf of their Church, it was not to be at the expense of ruining their party's electoral prospects.[89]

The Catholic Transport Guild acted as a compromise between those who sought rejection and permeation. It was formed in autumn 1930 in the wake of the Clancy dispute and its attendant conflicts. Amongst its leaders were exiles such as Lundy, Clancy and Sydney Hackett as well as Thomas Burns of the late Catholic Federation and Norbert Griffin a Conservative councillor whose brother George was priest at St.Robert's and Guild chaplain.[90] It was claimed to be neither political nor a trade union but a means of uniting the large number of Catholics employed in municipal transport and aimed to "encourage the spiritual side of their lives."[91]

The Guild was seen as a demonstration of the power and influence of the Catholic working class which did not entail direct electoral competition with Labour. Richard Lundy saw the first of the Guild's annual May Sunday parades - it should be recalled that May was celebrated by both the labour movement and the Catholic Church - as showing that, for Catholic workers "religion came before their politics, or trade union, or anything else."[92] It was, therefore, a continuation of the struggle against socialists and modernisers within the Labour party by other means, being active in promoting

---

[89] MCH, 12th, 19th January 1929.

[90] During the 1930s a number of trade guilds, encouraged by the hierarchy, were formed by Catholics in order to combat the influence of Communism, McDermott, Catholics and Labour, p.117; MCH, 22nd, 29th November, 6th, 20th December 1930; Catholic Herald Western Edition [hereafter CHWE], 28th January 1938.

[91] MCH, 22nd August 1931.

[92] MCH, 17th January 1931.

Catholic education, opposing birth control and encouraging film censorship. Father Ingram of St.Edward's, Rusholme envisaged it forming a buttress against the "pagan doctrines" of Communism and "extreme" socialism.[93] However, despite the large number of Catholic dockers, tramwaymen, railwaymen and others membership never exceeded 400 during the 1930s.[94] As with the Catholic Federation before it, there was little support amongst working class Catholics for such ventures when there was no direct threat.

Labour's disaster in the 1931 election, which left the party holding only one Manchester seat, obviously dampened the enthusiasm of Catholics to continue their fight within the party. This was not least because the Education Bill fell as a consequence of MacDonald's defection.[95] Although D.F.McNicholl wrote to the Manchester Catholic Herald in 1932 to remind readers that the conflict between Church and party was still unresolved the dispute had long since faded from the headlines.[96] Nor was there any apparent reason for Catholics to be excited - in the 1935 General Election Labour and the National Government presented manifestoes which offered virtually the same provision for Catholic schools.[97] By 1936 Catholics were fulminating against the educational schemes not of

---

[93]MCH, 12th May, 13th October 1934.

[94]MCH, 11th May 1935.

[95]Barker, Education, pp.62-3.

[96]MCH, 29th October 1932.

[97]MCH, 8th November 1935.

the Labour party but of the National government.[98] Any party in government which attempted to reform education was likely to provoke Catholic displeasure at one time or another.

Relations with Labour would have improved with the disaffiliation of the ILP from the party in 1932. The ILP has long been the bete noire of many Catholics, both because of its 'socialism' and advocacy of birth control.[99] The widespread sympathy for the Soviet Union amongst party members must have caused the Church some unease, seemingly confirming prejudices about Labour's relationship with Communism.[100] However, the Spanish Civil War, which raised great feelings of partisanship on both sides failed to produce any new kind of dissension in Manchester. Even in Glasgow, where differences were usually more heated, it was merely a question of new fights for old adversaries.[101]

5. Conclusion.

The Catholic Church was a formidable political opponent, especially in the post-Home Rule period when the Irish retained a sense of their social distinctiveness through affiliation to Catholicism. Nevertheless, through the large number of Catholic Labour members and an even larger number who simply voted for the party the Church could only exert an indirect pressure. Although it could temporarily dislodge Labour loyalties the Church was unable to replace them

---

[98] Corpus Christi Magazine, March 1936.

[99] Gallagher, Uneasy Peace, p.196.

[100] CHWE, 2nd July 1937; John Saville, 'May Day 1937', in Asa Briggs and John Saville (eds.), Essays in Labour History 1918-1939 (1977), pp.260-70.

[101] Gallagher, Uneasy Peace, pp.206-13.

completely. Catholics only rebelled when the party seemingly attacked Church schools, symbol of their own separate life. But rebellion led nowhere. Like peasant jacqueries Catholic revolts were protests against an otherwise accepted authority. There was a line between rebellion and treachery Catholics would not cross. Although elements within the party occasionally traduced their religion while members of their Church often assailed Labour most working class Catholics of Irish origin tried to reconcile, albeit not always successfully, party with Church.

Chapter Twelve. The Catholic Whit Walk.[1]

1. Introduction.

Public ceremonial and display help both to underline and give new form to existing relations, thoughts and emotions. In Manchester between 1890 and 1939 there was a large number and great variety of such public moments, both Irish and Catholic in origin. There were also numerous national and civic celebrations. They are, therefore, a convenient means of interpreting the place of Irish Catholics in Manchester. However, these were not 'innocent' events, for they were controlled by an institution or set of persons wanting to convey a particular message both to the participants and to society at large. The Catholic Church was principally involved in this field. How were the Irish and Catholics presented to the rest of the city and how was the message, conveyed by these public demonstrations, interpreted by non-Irish Catholics?

This chapter concentrates upon Manchester's annual Catholic Whit walk, the most important public demonstration originating from within Irish Catholic milieu. It occurred, weather permitting, throughout the period of this study and, therefore, served as a barometer of popular attitudes about the city's Catholics. Firstly, however, the procession will be placed in a wider context as consideration is given to the 'messages' conveyed by other national, civic and religious ceremonies and parades.

---

[1]This chapter is mainly based upon Steve Fielding, 'The Catholic Whit walk in Manchester and Salford 1890-1939', Manchester Region History Review, vol.i, no.1, 1987.

2. Ceremonial, public display and Irish Catholics.

When Irish or Catholics paraded or processed through the streets of Manchester, unlike in the rest of the Irish diaspora, they often appeared as distinct from, even in opposition to, the rest of society. For example, Nationalists had their own annual parades and processions, principally to commemorate the Manchester Martyrs' and St.Patrick's Day. In contrast to the United States and Australia St.Patrick's celebrations did not include a centralised parade: instead a political meeting on the Sunday after the Saint's day was substituted. Although there were a number of celebrations conducted by Catholic churches whilst those of Irish origin wore a touch of green, there was no central celebration to mark the occasion. It was an exclusively Irish affair in which few non-Catholic Englishmen participated. Elsewhere in the diaspora a parade expressed the immigrants' pride both in their Irish nationality and their newly adopted country. As early as the 1870s, in the United States, Civil War veterans and the Stars and the Stripes were prominent amongst the green and shamrock, whilst non-Catholic civic dignitaries marched with the Irish.[2] In late nineteenth century Massachusetts, for example, St.Patrick's parades were designed to celebrate the achievements of the Irish population within American society. Home Rule was barely mentioned.[3] Similarly, in Australia Home Rule was largely left in the background during celebrations which mainly took

---

[2]Clark, Philadelphia, p.109, 127; Thernstrom, Poverty, p.173.

[3]Timothy J.Meagher, '"Why should we care for a little trouble or a walk through the mud": St.Patrick's and Columbus Day parades in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1845-1915', New England Quarterly, 1985, vol.lvii, p.7, 9-10, 13-14, 26.

the form of sports contests and musical evenings in which many non-Irish participated. Only in Sydney was the Home Rule issue at all prominent and the message, therefore, much more ambiguous.[4]

In Manchester, however, both major Irish celebrations took on a meaning closely tied to the object of winning Home Rule. They were defiantly - but defensively - Irish. As one anonymous Irishman wrote in 1905

> For the Irishmen in Manchester [...] it may be said that they do not so far forget the religious character of St.Patrick's Day in observing its patriotic demands as to make it an occasion of offence to persons who were not fortunate enough to be born in Ireland.[5]

Due to Home Rule loyalty to the British state could only be expressed in a highly qualified manner and - despite friendly gestures to the Empire, monarch, Liberals and the working class - it was not well-received. The very nature of these occasions themselves made such declarations appear somewhat out of place. The Irish gathered to recall the injustice done to Ireland by Britain - the Manchester Martyrs had, after all, been executed by the British.

The only time St.Patrick's Day was truly popular outside the Irish domain was in 1900, during the Boer War, when the 'heroics' of the Irish Guards won popular favour. The Irish were consequently, and uniquely, seen in a new and favourable light.[6] All around Britain town halls flew flags in honour of the event. It seemed that everybody in Manchester was wearing shamrock and the demand for it

---

[4]Oliver MacDonagh, 'Irish culture and Nationalism translated: St.Patrick's Day, 1888, in Australia', in MacDonagh, Mandle, Travers, Irish Culture and Nationalism.

[5]MG, 18th March 1905.

[6]Tebbutt, Stereotypes, p.60.

was such that its price rose to new heights. It was cruelly ironic that whilst many English wore a sprig of green a substantial number of the poor Irish could not afford to buy the genuine article and were reduced to wearing cabbage leaves.[7] Whether the Irish were pleased at such newly-won admiration is doubtful, for Nationalists in Parliament were prominent in opposing the war. At the 1901 St.Patrick's rally the Nationalist M.P. J.O'Donnell compared the effectiveness of a UIL membership card with that of the Mausser rifle so popular with the Boers.[8] By that year, with the Irish Guards forgotten, few Englishmen wore a sprig of shamrock. By 1902 only the Irish, who could now afford to, wore a touch of green.[9]

With the establishment of the Irish Free State the Nationalist objective had, to all intents and purposes, been achieved. The Martyrs' parade continued but the St.Patrick's rally was dispensed with entirely. The demand for Home Rule no longer gave shape to these events. Nevertheless, the Irish were not yet ready to fully embrace their country of settlement. The final bloody years of British rule in Ireland did not make them eager to take up the American model and praise their adopted country. Living in Britain was something less to be celebrated than endured. In 1924 the day was marked in such an apparently muted manner that the Manchester Guardian, used to the noisier times of Home Rule agitation, thought that apart from the wearing of shamrock by those with "a bit of

---

[7] DD, March 19th 1900.

[8] DD, 18th March 1901.

[9] MG, March 18th 1901, March 18th 1902.

Irish" in them there was little to suggest that it was St.Patrick's Day.[10] Celebrations became almost private, being the concern of the parish church, local pub or club.

The Catholic Church was more willing and able to organise public demonstrations in order to put its power and influence on show. Even poor St.Wilfrid's managed to have four processions within its parish bounds in 1913, whereas nearly all churches put on a parade in the first week of May and on the Sunday following Whit friday (Trinity Sunday).[11] Such parochial events were often extremely elaborate and mobilised a large number of Catholic participants. In 1907 St.Francis' young May Queen was accompanied by 48 page boys.[12] In 1923 there were more than 2,000 participants in St.John's Trinity Sunday walk, whilst in 1929 many thousands lined the streets in the parish to watch St.Wilfrid's.[13] The Catholic public face often had competitive intentions, designed as it was to make the Anglican Church look inferior by comparison. In October 1906, for example, as part of their respective campaigns against the Liberals' Education Bill both Anglicans and Catholics held massive demonstrations at Belle Vue. Instead of combining their considerable joint strength the Anglicans held their protest on Saturday, 6th October whilst the Catholics demonstrated a week later. Although Bishop Casartelli told Catholics that the Anglican protest "deserved their admiration" it was clear that at the very least he did not

---

[10] MG, March 18th 1924.

[11] St.Wilfrid's parish log book; MCH, 15th June 1906.

[12] MCH, 10th May 1905.

[13] MCH, 2nd June 1923, 1st June 1929.

want the Catholic demonstration to be any less impressive.[14] He was subsequently pleased to announce to Catholics that their demonstration was probably larger in scale than the 60,000 strong Anglican protest.[15]

There were other public moments not specifically Catholic or Irish in origin but national and civic on which the Catholic Church contrived to leave its own distinctive mark. On these occasions the Church projected an ambiguous message, one of loyalty to, and integration in, wider society - but not of assimilation.

National moments of importance were marked by the Church. Every Armistice Sunday about 1,000 Catholic ex-servicemen paraded through Manchester to a special Mass at St.John's Cathedral.[16] On the Sunday prior to celebrations of Victoria's 1897 Diamond Jubilee the non-Catholic Mayor of Salford and most of the Corporation attended Salford Cathedral. They came to hear Bishop Bilsborrow who took his text from Proverbs: "By me kings reign and lawgivers decree just things. By me princes rule and the mighty direct justice". He declared that Catholics would join

> with heart and voice in the chorus of joy and thanksgiving to God which to-day is rising in millions of hearts and homes wherever the Empire's banner is unfurled and wherever the English language is spoken.

However, he reminded his audience, they were loyal citizens because of, and not despite, their religion. He continued that

> It is not for the effervescence of patriotism merely - although in our esteem for that national virtue we yield to none of our fellow-countrymen - but from the duty which our religion

---

[14] MG, 8th October 1906, MEN, 10th October 1906.

[15] MG, 15th October 1906.

[16] MCH, 22nd November 1930, 22nd November 1935.

> inculcates, that we, as Catholics, have ever been obedient to the laws, devoted to the commonweal, and faithful in our allegiance to the throne of this country.

This message was underlined in churches all over the city, not least at the Holy Name where a banner imploring 'God Bless Our Queen' hung in the chancel.[17] On the day itself, whilst all Catholic, as well as non-Catholic, children enjoyed a celebratory breakfast at their parish school black flags flew all over Ireland.[18]

Similarly, at moments of national mourning the Church made its voice heard. On the day of George V's funeral all denominations, including the Catholic, held special services. In its role as the national Church-in-waiting Catholics tried to make a particular impression. At St.John's the Bishop praised the late King, while at St.Augustine's in Manchester a "representative congregation" including Catholic members of the Council gathered, echoing the Established Church's more prestigious ritual.[19] In return Catholic mourning was also respected by prominent local non-Catholics. The Lord Mayors of both Manchester and Salford as well as the Chief Constable attended Bishop Casartelli's funeral in 1925.[20]

Moments of civic patriotism were not neglected by the Church. When Salford held a pageant in 1930 to celebrate the 700th anniversary of the granting of the Royal Charter Catholics took responsibility for one of its 'episodes'. This depicted the coming

---

[17] MG, 21st June 1897.

[18] MG, 23rd June 1897.

[19] MG, 29th January 1936.

[20] MG, 23rd January 1925.

of Christianity to the Borough.[21] A similar theme was found in the Catholic episode forming part of Manchester's 1938 Civic Pageant. This portrayed the dignity of the Church in the Dark Ages.[22] The Church probably intended that such occasions emphasised, in the words of one observer,

> the closeness with which the old Faith and its culture was bound up with the development of one of the greatest boroughs in England.[23]

Therefore, on such civic and national moments the Church keenly grasped the opportunity to place Catholics in an English and loyal context. These occasions were also used to emphasise the importance of the Church to Catholics.

The most important parade in the Catholic year, however, had a less harmonious effect. It put Catholic and Protestant in direct competition with one another and created a climate of hostility between the two groups. This was the Whit walk. Since the early nineteenth century Whitsun had been one of the most important weeks in the working class calender not only in Manchester but also in most of the cotton and wool towns of Lancashire, north-east Cheshire and west Yorkshire.[24] It was also a period in which Catholic-Anglican hostilities were given their clearest expression. This was because Anglicans and Catholics each paraded or 'walked' through the city's

---

[21] MCH, 24th May 1930.

[22] MG, 24th June 1938.

[23] MCH, 5th July 1930.

[24] Manchester was the first town to have a Whit walk. Other towns in this period mentioned in the local press as having them include: Ashton-under-Lyne, Bolton, Bury, Clitheroe, Dukinfield, Leeds, Heywood, Hyde, Mossley, Oldham, Preston, Radcliffe, Ramsbottom, Rochdale, Shaw, St.Helens, Stalybridge, Stockport and Wigan.

central streets. Anglicans made their first walk in Manchester in 1801 whilst Catholics did not walk until 1844 during the great wave of Irish immigration. By the middle of the century the pattern had largely been set for the following hundred years in which the Anglicans walked on the Monday of Whit week whilst Catholics did so on Friday. Although after the early 1920s the parades slowly lost their central place within the week as commercial and secular leisure increased in significance they retained a considerable impact right up to the eve of the Second World War. The continued popular importance of the Anglican walk, for example, is best captured in a 1933 Manchester Evening News headline which stated "1,700 Casualties In Manchester's Big Whit monday Walk, But It Was Well Worth It."[25] Even as late as 1935 the Catholic walk was still regarded as being "in any year, no doubt, the biggest spectacle that Manchester affords."[26]

3. The walk.

During the late eighteenth century, as Manchester was transformed from a market town of modest size into the world's first industrial city, many thousands of country people were drawn within its bounds. Whit had been a festival celebrated in a rural setting, but with the creation of a working class from landless labourers the holiday also changed. An attempt was made by members of the Nonconformist and Anglican churches to 'improve' popular conduct during the holiday. The walks were originally instituted as part of this respectable

---

[25]MEN, 5th June 1933. The casualties were not the result of sectarian fighting, but of sore feet and heat exhaustion.

[26]MG, 15th June 1935.

offensive with the particular aim of undermining the popularity of Kersal Moor races. In this the walks failed, for the week retained many of its supposedly unfortunate characteristics whereas Manchester races continued to attract thousands of spectators throughout our period. In spite of this, the walks themselves succeeded in becoming the week's central event, albeit side-by-side with less respectable celebrations. This paradoxical juxtaposition continued to be one of Whit's abiding features.[27]

The first walk in 1801 had been a competitive exercise giving expression to the rivalry between the Established and Nonconformist Sunday schools. To this, the entry of the Catholic Church into the arena in 1844 added national competition. With the decline of Nonconformity amongst the city's working class by the mid-century the dominant sectarian character of the walks had been established.

On each Whit Friday in our period spectators gathered along the streets of central Manchester as early as 7.30 a.m., the time at which parish contingents began to congregate outside their particular church. From these distant points they processed to Albert Square in which stood Manchester's town hall. Their bands playing, each parochial body was led by their parish priests who wore top hats for the occasion, followed by members of the church elected to the Council and Board of Guardians or appointed to the Bench. After them came the children and confraternities, the rear being brought up by members of the general laity. Having reached the

---

[27]This paragraph is mainly based upon William Doherty, Reminiscences of Old Manchester and Salford Telling How We Kept Whitsuntide Sixty Years Ago ... By an Octogenarian, (Manchester, 1887), pp.10-16; J.T.Slugg, Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago, (Manchester, 1881), pp.308-10; Rachel Ryan, A Biography of Manchester, (1937), pp.104-6; R.W.Malcomson, Popular Recreations in English Society 1700-1850, (1973), pp.31-3.

Square participants, or after 1900 those who could squeeze into it, sang 'Faith of our Fathers' and received benediction from the Bishop. He then led them out of the Square along the rest of the route which was shared with their Anglican rivals.

Prior to 1887 the walk had begun at New Cross in Ancoats, which lay in the midst of most Irish immigrants. It then moved along Great Ancoats Street, down to Ardwick Green, across to Oxford Road and up to Piccadilly. Albert Square, however, was not only a more grand place, the literal centre of civic affairs, it was also more central for Manchester's slightly more dispersed Catholic population. After 1887 processionists had a much shorter route from Albert Square, up Deansgate, along Market Street to Piccadilly where contingents dispersed to make their way back to their own parish.

All churches in the city were eligible to walk, although urban growth and the extension of municipal boundaries meant that some were unable to join the parade. In 1927 Mount Carmel, Blackley found the distance to Albert Square and back too great whereas St.Vincent's, Openshaw sent younger members of its contingent by tram.[28] There were also separate walks in townships with separate identities to that of Manchester, such as Gorton, Newton Heath, Failsworth and Stretford. Nevertheless, by the early 1900s twenty-two churches usually walked in any one year, representing a total of about 85,000 Catholics.

Although the Anglican walk remained what it had originally been, primarily a procession of children, the Catholic Church was concerned that their walks fully represented the Catholic body. Although the Manchester Catholic Herald described Whit friday as

---

[28] MCH, 26th May 1927.

"the childrens' day" it was that only in the sense that they were the ones forming the most prominent part of a parish's display. It did not mean that only children walked.[29] A large number of children did walk as members of the parish day school, rather than, as with the Anglicans, Sunday school. By doing this the parish school was given a quite deliberate emphasis. Nevertheless, neither walk was exclusively a childrens' event. The commitment of family resources, entailed by the participation of offspring, suggests that parents felt it to be very important, even if they themselves did not walk.

The Catholic Church was most insistent that adults, in particular men, walked on Friday for

> the men give an air of solidity to the Faith, of the hold of the Faith on Catholic manhood. The men claim respect for Catholic Interests ...[30]

Despite such calls it is evident that many did not walk. In 1906, a year in which 'Catholic Interests', in the form of parochial schools, were under threat the Manchester Catholic Herald noted that there "was a good number of men, though considering the strong appeal made to them one would have expected a better turnout." In the same issue a correspondent estimated that on the separate walk made by St.Francis' in Gorton only 200 out of 1,650 participants were men.[31] Many Catholic working men could not walk even if they had wanted to. Whit Friday, unlike Monday, was not considered to be a holiday by all employers. Both Smithfield market and the Corporation trams, large employers of Irish labour, operated in a normal

---

[29] MCH, 13th June 1935.

[30] Holy Name Messenger, June 1910.

[31] MCH, 15th June 1906.

manner.[32] As with attendance at Mass the Church was dissatisfied with levels of male participation Anglicans could only pray for. Consequently, the Manchester City News noted in 1930 that men were represented in "considerable numbers" on the Catholic walk.[33]

Despite Whit Friday not being considered a full holiday the Church was able to mobilise significant Catholic numbers. Within its catchment area about 20 per cent of Catholics walked. Unfortunately, press estimates are our only guide to measuring the popularity of the walks. These are summarised below and suggest that the Catholic walk was relatively much more popular with Catholics than the Church of England parade was with Anglicans.

Table 7. The number of participants in Manchester's Whit walk as estimated in the local press.

Year	Catholic	Anglican
1900	18,000	25,000
1904	18,000	30,000
1910	20,000+	24,000
1920		25,000
1922	25,000	
1938		20,000
1939	20,000	

In some parishes the number of participants was even more impressive. Prior to 1914 St.Patrick's was reported, on at least two occasions, having a contingent of 3,000. This amounted to between 25 and 30 per cent of all parishioners.[34] How many Catholics watched is obviously simply open to speculation, but it must have been a considerable number. Nor did these spectators passively observe the

---

[32]'Sisters' tape. In author's possession.

[33]MCN, 14th June 1930.

[34]MCH, 15th June 1906.

parade, but in a real sense participated in the walk, joining in 'Faith of our Fathers' and generally making a noise by shouting and singing.[35]

The Church was eager to rally the faithful during Whit because it wanted Friday to demonstrate the extent of its power and influence to the local polity. Anglicans, not feeling under any particular threat, placed less importance on this aspect of the walks. Between 1904 and 1920 the Bishop of Manchester did not even participate in the Monday parade.[36] For the Catholics, however, Whit walks were an oblique warning to those who sought to meddle with the 'Catholic Interest'. The Catholic councillors who walked respectively behind their parish priest did not show an allegiance to any particular party, but to their Church. This could be an extremely impressive demonstration of Catholic power. In 1931 all four elected representatives for St.Michael's ward, three councillors and an alderman, walked with St.Patrick's church.[37] The Lord Mayor of Manchester walked on Whit Friday only when he was a Catholic: in 1914 when the Liberal Dan Boyle held office and, again, in 1920 when the incumbent was Tom Fox, the first Labour Mayor. At such times the Mayor walked by the Bishop's side at the head of the parade.[38]

The walk also gave the Church and individual Catholics and Irish, a chance to express their self-respect and social status in a society where their religion was mistrusted and their nationality

---

[35] MCN, 14th June 1930.

[36] MG, 17th May 1921.

[37] MCH, 20th May 1931.

[38] MG, 6th June 1914; LCH, 15th June 1920.

derided. It is in this light that the singing of the Catholic battle hymn 'Faith of our Fathers', performed opposite Manchester town hall that mighty edifice of civic pride and power, should be interpreted. Together with Catholic spectators participants sang about the persecution, but eventual triumph, of the Catholic religion. Bart Kennedy recalled the emotions provoked by that moment.

> It's melody was one of those simple, thrilling, imperishable melodies born of a people in times stern and terrible. There was a sadness in it and at the same time there was a hope and exultation in it. And there was a firmness and resolve in it. There was at once a softness and a tenderness in it, and an indomitable resolution. It was that strange quality of fire that has been in the melodies that have inspired men to arise and overthrow iniqiutous states and empires.[39]

The popular vision of the Catholic Church and people as inferior and alien was, for a day, turned upon its head. As was observed in 1922, the walks

> give to Catholics a sense of their importance in the life of the city and to those of the other persuasion it gives much food for thought.[40]

It would, nevertheless, be a mistake to see the walks as simply an expression of a united Catholic population. As already shown, Catholics were divided by nationality and status; such distinctions were clearly revealed during Whit.

The importance of 'dressing up' for popular religious devotion has already been touched upon. Whit made the possession of decent clothes even more crucial. This was because it was the traditional period of the year that most working class parents bought their children new clothes.[41] This was a practice which stretched back

---

[39]Kennedy, Slavery, p.117-18; MCH, 28th May 1910.

[40]MCH, 8th April 1922.

[41]Toole, Fighting, pp.7-8.

before industrialisation. There was even a popular saying that to wear new clothes on Whit Sunday brought good luck.[42] Possession of such new clothes not only established status within the working class, but also allowed participation in the Catholic walk.[43] In this regard the Catholic Church, because of the greater importance it placed on the walk, was much more strict than the Established Church. If the people looked shabby so did the Church.

Decent clothes, however, were not enough. The Church insisted that children were part of a carefully coordinated display and had to be uniform. Parents were also obliged to purchase from the school head-dresses, crooks, rosettes and sashes made by local nuns.[44] The fate of those few children who could not conform was plain enough. One pre-1914 St.Patrick's scholar recalled "If you turned up on Whit Friday in spite of all your parents had done [...] without that rosette, you didn't walk."[45] Flowers, invariably lillies, were not obligatory but competition between parents ensured that many were bought. During the slump of 1922 a Manchester florist reported of Catholic children that they

> are here from seven in a morning, all clamouring to be served at once, and no matter how large a stock you lay in it seems impossible to satisfy the demand. We get some children whose parents will spend a sovereign or so in order that the child may look well in the procession, and we get poor kiddies who gaze wistfully on the flowers they have not the money to buy.[46]

---

[42] A.R.Wright and T.E.Jones, British Calender Customs. England, vol.i (1936), p.160.

[43] For the role of clothes at this time of year see Fielding, 'Whit', p.6.

[44] MS, tapes 457 and 544.

[45] MS, tape 457.

[46] MCH, 3rd June 1922.

At Mount Carmel, Ordsall it was school policy that clothes could only be purchased through its agency which, in turn, bought them from Catholic retailers.[47] Nuns and schools, like the commercial enterprises around them, tried to make a much-needed profit from Whitsuntide.

The ultimate result of this strenuous effort was that the Catholic walk was generally considered to make the Anglicans look dull and amateurish in comparison: it was more elaborate and disciplined.[48] Catholics noted this with no little smugness.[49] In 1906 the Protestant Thousand attempted to put limits on this display and complained to the Watch Committee about what it saw as the gaudy statue of the Madonna carried by the Italians of St.Michael's.[50] The unrivalled discipline of Catholic children was also widely noted. This particular characteristic was the result of weeks of drill and the exclusion of those under seven years. In 1932 this pursuit of order infuriated a number of parents as, despite a downpour, priests kept the children in line. Many youngsters began to cry as dye ran out of their clothes and down their legs. Mothers and fathers took the, for Catholics, unprecedented step of plucking their charges from the rain. This was probably less to save their children from a soaking than to salvage their costly clothes.[51] Clothes, in fact, took the form of an investment to be deposited in the local pawnshop

---

[47] MS, tape 487.

[48] MG, 31st May 1890, MEN, 8th June 1900.

[49] Harvest, July 1905.

[50] Harvest, June 1906.

[51] MEN, 20th May 1932, MCH, 21st and 28th May 1932.

as soon as Whit was over.[52] Participation in the walk often put that investment in danger for not only rain but also, during intense heat, tar from a road's melting surface could ruin clothes and shoes.[53] In making children walk in the wet priests put financial well-being in opposition to a well-ordered expression of loyalty to the Church. It is only surprising that more parents did not decline to make the sacrifice.

There was no absolute standard for clothes and display: each parish imposed its own order, and it was obvious to observers which were the poor and rich churches.[54] Similarly, during periods of high unemployment the less impressive display of working class contingents was also noted.[55] For over twenty years the walks provoked a 'friendly' rivalry between St.Wilfrid's and the neighbouring, but much richer, Holy Name as to which parish had the best display. It was a contest that Holy Name invariably won.[56]

The Church was more relaxed about the attire worn by adults on the walk as it was only too glad to have as many of them as possible. Adults were not there for show, as were the children, but to provide the backbone. Nevertheless, as with Mass, adults still dressed up. In 1895 the Manchester Guardian's correspondent

---

[52]During Whitsuns of the interwar period one pawnbroker grossed £500, Colin Bundy and Dermot Healy, 'Aspects of urban poverty', Oral History, vol.vi, no.1, 1978, p.90.

[53]Richard Heaton, Salford, My Home Town (Swinton, 1985), p.10.

[54]MCH, 15th June 1900.

[55]MCH, 17th June 1922.

[56]MCH, 15th June 1900, 28th May 1921, 3rd and 17th June 1922.

described several groups of Catholic older women

> who had long veils falling all over their white frocks, and, for the only colour, chaplets of light green leaves or of flowers.[57]

The poor also felt impelled to make the best of a bad job. A journalist who walked with St.John's in 1933 accompanied an elderly man wearing well-worn clothes, but he noted that "these had been carefully brushed and pressed for the occasion."[58]

Whit gave each Catholic national minority a chance to express their distinct identity. The participation of the small number of Italian, Polish, Ruthenian and Ukrainian Catholics on Whit Friday did not provoke much, if any, hostility. However, the large and noisy body of Irish caused much ill-feeling, with St.Patrick's the most demonstratively Irish parish. It seems likely that, with the absence of a central St.Patrick's Day parade, the Irish used the Whit walk as a means of publicly expressing pride in their nationality. This was, however, a sentimentalised version of Irish nationality. There was a plethora of green flags, banners and kilted Irish pipe bands. One such was the 'MacSweeney' pipe band, named after the Mayor of Cork who died on hunger-strike in 1920. These bands played tunes like 'Killarney' and 'The wearing of the green'.[59] This was not meant to be a threatening display of nationality, but one which underlined the importance of the faith to the Irish. This purpose was made explicit by one banner displayed in 1921, that is

---

[57] MG, 8th June 1895.

[58] MEN, 9th June 1933.

[59] MG, 1st June 1912; MCH, 24th May 1934; MEN, 10th June 1938.

in the midst of the Irish Civil War, which pleaded 'Saint Patrick Pray For Us".[60] As late as 1935 it could be said of the Catholic walk that

> Most of the tunes were Irish airs. One had seen a banner with the legend "God Save Ireland - 1898", and Irishness again and again drew attention to the processionists. It was no surprise, therefore, to find the stirring tune rousing spectators to sing was that "old Ireland shall again be free", or when that had finished to see a few steps of the jig performed in the side streets behind the spectators' backs.[61]

Such joviality was not well-met by all spectators. One man was heard to declare "You'd think we were in bloody Ireland, wouldn't you. Why the 'ell don't they play something English?"[62]

The Church allowed participants to be less restrained when it came to showing their loyalty to the British state. During the Boer War the parishes of St.John's and the Holy Name had all their boys dressed as soldiers and girls as nurses marching behind the Union Jack to the tune of 'Soldiers of the Queen'. Even St.Wilfrid's had three boys dressed as Irish Guards who, as has already been stated, were reknowned for their heroics in the conflict.[63] Compared with the Anglican parade, however, this was a relatively muted display of British patriotism. Mary Bertenshaw also recalled that during the Great War the Monday walks were much more jingoistic and bellicose.[64] Perhaps Catholic internationalism played its part here.

---

[60] MCH, 28th May 1921.

[61] MG, 13th June 1935.

[62] Bertenshaw, Sunrise, p.93.

[63] MEN, 8th June 1900, MCH, 15th June 1900.

[64] Bertenshaw, Sunrise, pp.91-3.

Nevertheless, whatever message the Church attempted to impose upon the day, for the people it was largely an opportunity to have a good time, something many Catholics quite naturally expressed in an 'Irish' manner. As one participant prosaically recalled, "You jigged all the way into town and back again."[65]

Although only a minority of the many thousands who watched the Friday walk were Catholics there was apparently no organised attempt to spoil the event. The supposed absence of hostilities led the Manchester Evening News to declare in 1921, the year of an IRA bombing campaign in the city, that "on these occasions, happily, people forget racial or religious differences."[66] Yet people did not forget. The walks, in fact, reminded them of their 'differences'. It was back in working class districts, rather than in the city centre that this hostility was expressed - sullenly, individually and often under the influence of drink. In Manchester conflict occurred unevenly, affecting particular individuals, families and streets. It was often not even violent but purely symbolic. On Whit Friday one Protestant woman made her protest by not washing her front doorstep, as was the custom at the start of the weekend.[67] One member of St.Patrick's parish who participated in the church's Trinity Sunday parade recalled that she could tell by the hostile 'look' of people whether they approved or not.[68] As late as the 1950s in some streets

---

[65]'Miss R.' Tape in author's possession.

[66]MEN, 16th May 1921.

[67]MS, tape 457.

[68]'Sisters' tape. In author's possession.

in St.Patrick's parish the "pretty bitter" rivalry was made somewhat more obvious. Here Catholics placed pictures of the Pope in their front windows, whilst Protestants displayed pictures of the Queen.[69]

The weather was vitally important to the success of the walks as the infamous Manchester rain could lay waste to even the best prepared display. Good weather was consequently seen as a sign that God was on one particular side, especially if it rained on the rival's day. Divine intervention was commonly called for. As one participant remembered, "Those of the opposite faith used to pray for rain on Whit Friday [...] But the same applied to the other side."[70] In 1934 the Manchester Catholic Herald reported that on the Sunday before Whit Friday prayers were being offered for good weather in all of the city's Catholic churches. Nevertheless the issue still contained the meteorological forecast for the week.[71]

Trouble occurred during years when one side's prayers failed to prevent rain, whereas God had apparently blessed the opponents with a fine day. One Knott Mill resident explained for the period after 1918.

> It was pretty bitter an' all; say Whit monday was a nice day and it rained on Whit Friday, oh there was terrible, it'd be terrible, there'd be fights all over the place, because the weather hadn't been good for Whit Friday. And it was the same if the weather was good for Whit Friday and it was bad for Whit m
>
> Who would be fighting?
>
> It was fighting amongst neighbours. There was always a punch-up, like [...] just a scrap between you. It'd be forgotten, like, you'd meet in the pub and it'd be forgotten.[72]

---

[69]Turner, Collyhurst, p.84.

[70]MS, tape 457.

[71]MCH, 19th May 1934.

[72]MS, tape 492.

It was no coincidence that Whit week was both a time for excessive drinking and sectarian conflict. Drink featured prominently in most types of popular celebration and Whit was no exception. Both St.Patrick's Day and Catholic Trinity Sunday processions were well-known as occasions for excessive drinking.[73] Even Mick Burke's Irish street-hawker mother, a devout Catholic, made full use of the Whit holiday.

> The only time she had off was Whit week when the house would be stacked with food and we all had to help ourselves. She'd say, "It's my week this week," and be on the booze all week, made up like the first lady of the land.[74]

Those who did not normally drink, did so at Whit.[75] Similarly, it was also the time for the religiously apathetic to recall their nominal allegiance. As one respondent stated, "My dad was a Catholic for Whit Friday only."[76]

John Tomlinson recalled the situation in St.Patrick's parish during the interwar years.

> ... there certainly was quite a lot of bigotry in those days which became manifest at Whit monday and Whit Friday, after the Whit Walks took place, when the bitterness crept in mostly caused by people drunk as lords who attended no religious service from year's end to the other, and only knew what religion they belonged to because they had been born into it...[77]

---

[73]MCH, 14th March 1925; Mass Observation, Pub and the People, pp.196-7, 326-7.

[74]Burke, Lad, p.5.

[75]MS, tape 457.

[76]MS, tape 457.

[77]Turner, Collyhurst, p.25.

The combination of Whit with drink was not always explosive. One Ardwick respondent used to meet his Protestant friends after their Monday walk and went to the pub to celebrate. They reciprocated on Friday.[78] Generally, however, the fusion of drink with religion, particularly in areas where the Irish mainly lived, such as Ancoats and Hulme, produced an unstable mixture.

For some, however, the walks were a complete irrelevance; for others they actually spoilt their holiday by blocking the city's streets and impeding the route to Manchester race course.[79] This had always been the case during Whit: the secular and spiritual had been in competition since 1801. As the century progressed commercial entertainments became more sophisticated, extensive and impressive. Whit was a busy time for such attractions. Belle Vue had established itself as a popular centre for leisure by the late nineteenth century. The annual Lancashire-Yorkshire cricket match at Old Trafford often took place during Whit and in the early 1920s attracted 30,000 spectators per day.[80] An increasing number of people left for Blackpool during the week as the twentieth century progressed.[81] The walks, in particular the Anglican walk, seem to have suffered from this competition. On Whit monday in 1922 there were said to be as many visitors at Belle Vue as there were

---

[78]'Mr.O.' Tape in author's possession.

[79]*MG, 31st May 1890.*

[80]MG, 17th May 1921.

[81]The Manchester Guardian made a conservative estimate that on Whit Friday 1930 25,000 people left Victoria and Exchange stations for the coast, MG, 14th June 1930.

spectators watching the walk.[82] However, there was no terminal collapse in interest, and the 1939 crowd was described as being one of the largest for many years.[83]

Many employers would also have been glad to have done with Whit, as it diverted their employees' attentions from work.[84] During the 1930s the city's business community, long-tired of the inconvenience, proposed that the Whit celebrations be concentrated into a long weekend and the walks take place in one of a number of public parks.[85] The *Bishop of Salford defended the walks from such* attacks, which he ascribed to sinister, but unstated, motives.[86] Despite pressure from such powerful sources Whit *week as a whole and* the walks in particular were sufficiently popular to remain unchanged until the post-1945 period.[87]

A number of historians see the walks and similar popular religious celebrations as mere appendages to leisure. According to A.W.Smith and J.H.S.Kent religious festivals, such as Whit, had little sacred content and were used by the working class for their own hedonistic purposes.[88] Some contemporaries were also concerned that the walks were not 'religious' enough. A Free Church minister

---

[82] MG, 6th June 1922.

[83] MEN, 29th May 1939.

[84] MEN, 26th May 1890.

[85] MG, 13th June 1930.

[86] MG, 20th May 1932.

[87] Stephen G.Jones, Workers at Play (1986), pp.77-8.

[88] A.W.Smith, 'Popular religion', Past and Present, 40, 1968; J.H.S.Kent, 'The role of religion in the cultural structure of the later Victorian city', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol.xxiii, 1973.

complained in 1928 that they were not religious demonstrations at all but "savoured rather of a 'pagan pageant' and an occasion for dress and show."[89] A small number of the Catholic laity were also worried about the effect of tunes played by accompanying brass bands which ranged far from simple hymns. One Catholic complained in 1907 that to

> see a handsome banner of the Blessed Virgin being carried into Albert Square behind a band playing the latest music-hall ditty is something more than incongruous.

The Catholic authorities, however, were much more relaxed about the matter and did not think that 'Stop your tickling Jock' and later 'Colonel Bogey' seriously detracted from the main religious purpose of the walks.[90] Perhaps the Manchester City News was nearer the truth when it described the 1930 Catholic walk as a

> striking manifestation of religious faith, a manifestation which fills the streets with colour and music, dispelling joyously the idea that gloom and sadness are necessary attributes of religion.[91]

4. Conclusion.

Manchester's annual Whit walks were the most culturally significant of the city's numerous occasions for public display. They also gave Catholics a regular opportunity to express their distinct identity. They were also, in the absence of a specifically Irish parade of any real size, an opportunity for members of that population to demonstrate their nationality. That a display of Irishness occurred under the auspices of the Catholic Church must have been of

---

[89] DD, 5th June 1928.

[90] MCH, 12th April 1907, 13th June 1935; Harvest, July 1907.

[91] MCN, 14th June 1930.

significance for the continued attachment of the Irish to the Church. Moreover, the walks were a competitive exercise which temporarily revived popular awareness of those differences which still existed between Anglican and Catholic, English and Irish. This they did in a starkly dichotomous and acute manner, a consequence of the walks being controlled and manipulated by two rival religious institutions.[92]

That the Whit walks tended to divide Protestant from Catholic was quite ironic as they were not only Anglican but specifically Mancunian in origin - the Catholic Church had merely assumed an indigenous practice. The walks, therefore, pointed to the integration of Catholics into a wider culture under the auspices of their Church whilst, at the same time, showing how different they remained. Durkheim's comment that ritual's function is to "awaken certain ideas and sentiments, to attach the present to the past and the individual to the collectivity" is relevant here.[93] Those participants and many observers of the Whit Friday walk formed a collectivity which was defined by Catholicism and, to a lesser extent, Irishness. Both were founded upon a past largely distinct from that of the rest of society. The event vividly recalled social, religious, national and political differences. As one contemporary recalled "it was 'God Save the King' Monday morning and 'God save the Pope' Friday afternoon."[94] Whereas Catholics sang 'Faith of our

---

[92]For the 'mobilisation of bias' thesis upon which this comment is based, S.Lukes, 'Political ritual and political integration', in Lukes, Essays in Social Theory (1977), p.68.

[93]S.Lukes, Emile Durkheim, (1981), p.469.

[94]Tape in the possession of Andrew Davies, Ph.D. student, King's College, Cambridge.

Fathers' Anglicans sang the National Anthem, whilst many Catholics displayed Irish green their rivals highlighted the red, white and blue of the Union Jack.

Conclusion.

Manchester's annual Whit walk aptly summed up the position of the city's Irish Catholic population during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The walks were clear evidence of the way the population faced both ways: they asserted a proud affiliation to the Catholic Church - and, as a subtext, to Ireland - yet it was an affirmation of faith which occurred in a wholly Mancunian context. In contrast, despite all its efforts the city's labour movement was never able to turn May Day into an event of much significance.[1] Moreover, although somewhat reduced in cultural importance and impact by the 1930s, the walks still aroused sectarian passions, especially in districts of greatest Catholic numbers, such as Collyhurst.

Whilst not underestimating change - particularly in the conduct and meaning of politics - this study has emphasised the continuity of the period. Apparently, this is presently the fashion in the writing of history.[2] It is not a trend with which this writer would want to be associated: yet, continuity is surely as much a part of history as change, and in this particular instance such an emphasis seems appropriate. Although it is tempting to speculate that, for example, between 1890 and 1939 the number of middle class Catholics

---

[1]For two examples of Labour's attempts to turn the day into one of wider celebration, MG, 3rd May 1920, 5th May 1930.

[2]"For what is now clear is that the massive proliferation of Ph.D.-inspired scholarship has often served not to illuminate the central themes of British history, but rather to obscure them. British historians today are mainly concerned to show that less happened, less dramatically, than was once thought.", David Cannadine, 'British history; past, present - and future?', Past and Present, no.116, 1987, p.183.

and skilled workers increased they still were in the minority. Moreover, this group would have been more 'Catholic' than 'Irish'. Those skilled workers who established the Catholic Federation in 1906 were exercised by Church issues; they saw Home Rule more as an embarrassment than a cause to be warmly embraced. In spite of the advance of a number of Catholics, as a group they remained disproportionately poorer than the rest of the working class. Catholicism was still, more than any other, a religion of the poor.

The most significant change during the period 1890-1939 was the fall in the number of Irish immigrants entering Manchester. Even that, however, was a continuation of a trend established in the 1860s. With the fall in immigration, by the late 1930s the city was no longer amongst the first rank of places of new Irish settlement. This had its effect on political activity. Although the most important centre of Irish Self-Determination League activity during the period after the First World War, by the 1930s London, Liverpool and the Midlands were at the cutting edge. The Connolly Association was established in 1938 by recent immigrants in Birmingham, Liverpool and London; there was no branch in Manchester until after 1939.[3] Similarly, it was no accident that these former areas were also at the forefront of the IRA's 1939-40 bombing campaign.[4] Decline in immigration had more long-term effects, as it allowed for a generational loosening of national loyalties. With fewer Irish entering established Catholic districts, the faith began to lose its

---

[3]C.Desmond Greaves, 'The Connolly Association', paper presented at the North West Labour History Society annual conference, March 26th, 1988.

[4]Letitia Fairfield, The Trial of Peter Barnes and Others. The IRA Coventry Explosion of 1939 (1953), Appendix V.

green tinge; working class Catholicism and Irish nationality were becoming more distanced. The results of this process were to become more apparent after 1945 with rehousing.[5]

Nevertheless, the most important feature of Irish Catholic culture - the Church - remained largely in place. Catholic schools had, if anything, increased their scope within Manchester. However, although formal adherence showed little sign of decline in 1939 the vitality of parish life in working class districts appears to have been on the wane. The removal to the suburbs of skilled workers and members of the middle class, that is those who largely comprised the devout, reduced the number of the most active members of predominantly working class parishes. Increasingly, the range of Catholic welfare and recreational provision declined in the face of an encroaching state and more attractive commercial alternatives. Along with the demoralising effects of the interwar slump these forces slowly chipped away at the social foundations of the 'Fortress Church'.

In the early 1930s the Church in Manchester was pessimistic about future developments. Proposed plans to clear the city's slum districts seemed to foreshadow the destruction of parish life in many parts of the city. Due to clearance, St.William's in Angel Meadow had already been reduced to a chapel of ease, mainly patronised by Lithuanians.[6] Long-established working class communities, with their own delicate and imperceptable social and economic balance, were to be transported to new and greener sites,

---

[5]In the United States the dissolution of Irish Catholic communities appears to have proceeded at a greater pace and involved a larger proportion of the population, Gilley, 'Irish diaspora', pp.203-4.

[6]MCH, 25th October 1935.

leaving behind them an institutional framework that had been constructed by the Church only slowly, painstakingly and expensively over the previous seventy five years. Whereas the Hadow Report threatened to fracture the parochial principle in education, slum clearance firmly promised the complete annihilation of whole parishes. In October 1933 the Bishop of Salford was sufficiently concerned about Manchester Council's proposals to issue a pastoral letter on slum clearance. Henshaw declared that, although no opponent of the principle of clearance, he held serious reservations about the rehousing of Catholics. He wanted adherents to be relocated only within their immediate districts. If this was not possible, he demanded that the Council compensated the Church for the building of new churches and schools in far-flung areas of settlement. In each of the city's parishes Catholics gathered to discuss the matter and passed resolutions supporting their Bishop's position.[7]

Hostility to rehousing was most intense in St.Malachy's parish, Collyhurst where most of the small amount of pre-1939 clearance was concentrated. Father Vincent Marshall, the parish priest, took a leading role in mobilising forces against the Council.[8] In 1934 he declared that

> The people had their social life to think of. They wanted to live amongst their friends. Their religion was going to be violated.[9]

---

[7] MG, 30th October 1933.

[8] Marshall was to become Bishop of Salford in 1939.

[9] MCH, 30th June 1934.

Unfortunately for the Church, St.Malachy's had only been established in the early 1920s; the parish school had been opened as late as 1930, albeit in the face of opposition from both the Board of Education and Council.[10] The Church could not afford to be sanguine about writing off such heavy expenditure.

Opposition to rehousing in distant areas was not confined to the Catholic Church alone. Various surveys of this period discovered a widespread fear and discontent about removal. Generations of working class families had been raised in areas such as Ancoats and many were loathe to leave.[11] One 1930s survey discovered that although 194 households were prepared to move 199 were not.[12] During the municipal elections of 1933 Labour's candidate in Medlock Street ward, Hulme was forced to promise that residents would not be despatched to "distant estates".[13] In Collyhurst, Catholics and Protestant were so concerned they temporarily overcame their differences and held a joint meeting to make their voices heard.[14]

In December 1933 a delegation from St.Malachy's met the chairman of the Council's special slum clearance committee. They left with their requests rejected and, for their pains, the chairman accused Catholics of demanding special treatment.[15] This the Church stridently denied.[16] However, the Council remained adamant that only

---

[10] MG, 25th August 1930.

[11] MCN, 29th April 1939.

[12] MUS, Housing Needs of Ancoats, pp.9-11.

[13] MG, 1st November 1933.

[14] MG, 3rd November 1933.

[15] MG, 13th December 1933.

[16] MG, 16th December 1933.

those too poor to meet increased travelling costs were to be rehoused within their original district. It was calculated that this meant that at least half of Collyhurst residents would have to leave the area.[17] By 1934, in the face of such implacable position, Father Marshall had all but given up the fight.[18]

Ironically, the Council's clearance programme had hardly begun when Britain went to war in 1939. It was during the post-1945 period that many of the Church's fears were realised, and on a scale that could not have been envisaged in the early 1930s. During the 1950s and 1960s the population of Ancoats, Hulme, Ordsall and other working class districts was scattered far and wide, not only to Wythenshawe, but also Middleton, Sale and even Knutsford, deep in rural Cheshire. Old areas of Irish Catholic residence were drastically depopulated, thereby decisively breaking a geographical continuity with the nineteenth century. Residents were plucked from tradition and history; future generations were to grow up in an environment largely divorced from pre-1939 experiences. Contemporary Ancoats and Collyhurst bear witness to this process. St.Patrick's church, which once enjoyed the largest number of Irish adherents in the city, now caters for a tiny and aged population. There is a question mark over its future. By the middle of the 1960s most of the Catholic population had been scattered miles from Manchester; this meant that the city's Whit walk had become impractical to stage, except for a small number of those who remained in the old districts. During that decade it was abandoned; the present Bishop

---

[17] MG, 19th December 1933.

[18] MG, 6th February 1934.

of Salford feels no attraction in reviving it.[19] Instead of living in areas populated by large numbers of Catholics of Irish descent, Irish immigrants after 1945 moved into inner-city districts, such as Moss Side, which prior to 1939 had been too middle class to have enjoyed substantial Catholic settlement. Therefore, instead of forming part of a demographic continuum, stretching back to the Famine and beyond, the new Irish did not settle in established working class Catholic districts. Instead, they found themselves living next door to more recent coloured immigrant groups, such as West Indians.[20]

The Second World War was also the occasion for the restructuring of education in England and Wales. Despite serious misgivings about loss of control and the destruction of parochial units, the Church was unable to prevent the 1944 Education Act. The war against Hitler prevented yet another war against the Protestant-secular state. As A.C.F.Beales noted "there was no longer an effective public opinion persuaded that religion is indeed the core of education."[21] In his very pessimistic 1950 piece, Beales glumly declared that the task of the contemporary Catholic Church could only be defensive: to prevent the complete destruction of a distinctive Catholic education.[22]

---

[19]Conversation with Father Nathaniel, Wardley Hall, 1986.

[20]Robin H.Ward, 'Some aspects of religious life in an immigrant area in Manchester', Sociological Year Book of Religion, no.3, 1970; Jackson, Irish, p.18.

[21]A.C.F.Beales, 'The struggle for the schools', in Beck, English Catholics, p.404.

[22]Beales, 'struggle for the schools', p.407.

As Michael Hornsby-Smith's recent study has shown, after 1945 Catholics began to lose many of their culturally distinctive characteristics.[23] During the 1960s and 1970s Catholics of Irish or English birth tended not to pay much heed to their Church's guidance in relation to marriage, birth control or abortion. During this period, the Catholic Church itself underwent a transformation in attitudes: no longer was it a fortress in opposition to Protestant society, intent on protecting adherents from non-Catholic influences. The influence of the ecumenical movement and Vatican II were also significant here.[24]

To return to the original point: for the years before 1939 continuity is the key; apart from politics, change was slow. Even after 1945 south-east Lancashire was by no means untainted by hostility to mixed marriage; during the 1950s those Catholics forming such unions with non-Catholics were, on occasion, ostracised.[25] Even during the early 1960s, hostility to Catholics could be aroused quite inexplicably. The example quoted below is taken from Stoke, all the more remarkable for occurring in a town almost untouched by Irish immigration.

> Tony had been walking out with a girl who was training to be a nurse. Suddenly her mother forbade her to see him, not because she had anything personal against him, but because he was a Catholic. Tony was furious, and all the more because he practically never went to Mass; his Catholicism meant scarcely more to him than his Irish ancestry, about which he was

---

[23]Hornsby-Smith, Catholics in England pp.92-3, 108-9.

[24]Hornsby-Smith, Catholics in England, p.100.

[25]On the basis of comments made during discussions which followed a number of my seminar papers, it seems plain that sectarianism, albeit in a weaker form, continued to thrive in certain parts of the county.

> completely vague. He felt as injured as an assimilated Jew reminded of his background by a chance brush with anti-semitism.[26]

This was a residual prejudice. However, in the wake of Ulster's recent 'Troubles', similar sentiments, based on prejudices of nationality rather than religion, have again become evident.[27] As during the period 1916-22, Irish residents and their offspring have been held to account for events in Ireland - very probably, by many of those who can trace a line of descent back to the poor Irish who settled in Manchester and Salford before 1939.

---

[26]Mervyn Jones, Potbank. (1961), p.95.

[27]Paul Harrison, 'The Irish English', in Paul Barker (ed.), The Other Britain (1982); Philip Ullah, 'Second generation Irish youth: identity and ethnicity', New Community, vol.xii, no.2, 1985, pp.310-22.

Appendices.

Key to Tables.

1. Estimates of the Catholic Population
i Estimates for individual parishes in Manchester and Salford, 1890-1939.
ii Estimated parochial population for churches in north Manchester, 1900-39.

2. The Total Number of Irish-Born Living in Manchester and Salford 1841-1931.
i. Manchester.
ii Salford.

3. The Number and Proportion of Catholics in Certain Districts of Manchester and Salford
i The proportion of Catholics living within the boundaries of selected parishes, 1900.
ii Census of households in St.Michael's, Church of England, parish, Angel Meadow, c.late nineteenth century.
iii Census of households in St.Luke's, Church of England, parish, Chorlton-on-Medlock, c.early twentieth century.
iv Census of households in St.George's, Church of England, parish, Hulme, 1927.
v Census of remaining households after clearance in St.Andrew's, Church of England, parish, Ancoats 1937.
vi Denominations of families with a church 'connection' in the Every St. area of Ancoats, 1938.
vii Census of households in the Moston area by members of the New Moston Congregational Church, 1939.

4. Occupations in Certain Districts in Which the Irish Were Preponderant.
i. Ancoats, 1889.
ii St.Michael's ward (area contiguous with Smithfield market), 1904.
iii Chorlton-on-Medlock, 1904.
iv. Hulme, occupations of fathers, 1939.

5. The Religion of Those Reliant Upon the Poor Law.
i The religion of inmates of New Bridge St. workhouse, 1881-1914.
ii Catholics in certain other public institutions.
iii Religion of children adopted by the Guardians of the Manchester Union under their control, 1st January 1929.

6. The Proportion of Irish Priests in the Salford Diocese.
i Birthplace of priests working in the Salford diocese.
ii Proportion of priests born and working in the Salford diocese with an identifiably Irish surname.

7. The Salford Diocesan Census, 1900.
i The proportion of Catholics attending Easter Communion in Manchester parishes.
ii Average attendance at mid-week evening Mass.

8. Attendance to Easter duties, St.Wilfrid's, Hulme, 1914-37.

9. The Structure and Extent of Confraternity Membership in Certain Parishes.
i St.Wilfrid's confraternity structure.
ii The extent of confraternity membership in selected parishes.

10. St.Wilfrid's Cadre, 1910-11.

11. Companies and Membership of the Catholic Boys' Brigade and Scouts in Manchester, 1919-33.
i Parishes with a Scout troop or Boys' Brigade Company, 1919.
ii Parishes with Scout troops, 1927-33.

12. The Occupational Structure of Manchester, Salford and Liverpool for Males Over 10 Years, 1911.
i Manchester.
ii Salford.
iii Liverpool.

13. The Number of Catholic Schoolchildren in Manchester.
i Number on rolls of public elementary schools in Manchester, 1905-38.
ii Public elementary school accomodation in Ancoats and Hulme, 1905.

14. Membership of the Catholic Federation, 1908-28.
i Total membership in Manchester and Salford.
ii The proportion of total membership in the parishes of St.Anne's, Ancoats, St.Francis', St.John's and St.Thomas'.

15. The Background of Oral Respondents.
i Manchester Studies respondents.
ii Interviewees

Throughout this work percentages have been generally rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.

Key to Tables.

1. All Souls, Weaste
2. Corpus Christi, Miles Platting
3. English Martyrs', Alexandra Park
4. Holy Family, All Saints
5. Holy Name, Chorlton-on-Medlock
6. Mount Carmel, Blackley
7. Mount Carmel, Ordsall
8. Sacred Heart, Gorton
9. St.Alban's, Ancoats
10. St.Aloysius', Ardwick
11. St.Anne's, Ancoats
12. St.Anne's, Crumpsall
13. St.Anne's, Fairfield
14. St.Anne's, Stretford
15. St.Anthony's, Trafford Park
16. St.Augustine's, Chorlton-cum-Hardy
17. St.Augustine's, Chorlton-on-Medlock/All Saints*
18. St.Benedict's, Pendleton
19. St.Bonfiace's, Broughton
20. St.Bridget's, Bradford
21. St.Casimir's, Ancoats
22. St.Chad's, Cheetham Hill
23. St.Cuthbert's, Withington
24. St.Dunstan's, Moston
25. St.Edmund's, Miles Platting
26. St.Edward's, Rusholme
27. St.Francis', Gorton
28. St.James', Pendleton
29. St.John's, Chapel Street
30. St.Joseph's, Longsight
31. St.Joseph's, Ordsall
32. St.Lawrence's, Hulme
33. St.Malachy's, Collyhurst
34. St.Mary's, Levenshulme
35. St.Mary's, Manchester
36. St.Michael's, Ancoats
37. St.Patrick's, Ancoats
38. St.Peter's, Greengate
39. St.Robert's, Longsight
40. St.Sebastian's, Pendleton
41. St.Thomas', Broughton
42. St.Vincent's, Openshaw
43. St.Wilfrid's, Hulme
44. St.William's, Angel Meadow
45. St.Willibrod's, Clayton

* St.Augustine's church was relocated in the early 1900s.

Appendix 1. Estimates of the Catholic Population.

Table 1. Estimates for individual parishes in Manchester and Salford, 1890-1939.

	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1939
1.		400	600	1000	1370	2050
2.	--	3500	3500	3116	3927	4000
3.		805	700	850	1369	--
4.	4510	4000				
5.	2068	3500	3500	4550	6000	7500
6.	1011	2000	3000	4000	3800	3800
7.	3260	5300	4050	3800	4500	3000
8.			420	550	550	4000
9.	1584	2000	1600	1100	1830	1800
10.	3200	2900	2900	2700	3000	3000
11.	7774	7774	6000	6800	8144	6980
12.				427	677	1094
13.	902	1200	800	1340	--	1000
14.	352	300	700	1100	1450	2000
15.			200	450	--	600
16.		230	300	558	--	1600
17.	4848	4000	--	6000	5850	5850
18.					300	3700
19.		1300	1300	1790	2123	2123
20.	3212	4300	4300	5500	--	3700
21.			1000	900	900	
22.	6842	2200	3500	1600	3300	3300
23.	264	750	700	820	1650	2550
24				602	--	1680
25.	4796	6000	6000	6500	6500	4000
26	286	551	1400	1490	2589	--
27.	4330	5400	5400	5650	6900	5900
28.	4796	4800	4470	4470	4288	4400
29.	9000	9000	7000	6682	8100	4792
30.	572	1300	1000	1500	1700	1700
31	2948	3000	3000	3359	3300	3200
32.					900	700
33.					4000	2020
34.	150	400	566	909	1300	1300
35.	3168	1700	1700	600	1097	850
36.	3366	2700	2700	980	1719	1500
37.	13000	12200	10000	10000	8000	9500
38.	2928	2600	1700	1800	2000	2000
39.				815	1100	1900
40.			2000	2500	2816	2870
41.	1000	1580	2350	3500	3700	3500
42.		650	1000	1590	2000	1450
43.	7678	7900	6800	7360	7000	4500
44.	--	3000	3500			
45.			650	900	--	2900
Total	97,845*	109,240	100,306*	100,158	119,749*	125,709*

-- no return for that year
* incomplete total

Table 2. Estimated parochial populations for churches in north Manchester, 1890-39.

	Parish	1890	1939
2.	Corpus Christi	(3500)	3000
9.	St.Alban's	1584	1800
11.	St.Anne's	7774	6980
25.	St.Edmund's	4796	4000
33.	St.Malachy's	--	2020
36.	St.Michael's	3366	1500
37.	St.Patrick's	13000	9500
44.	St.William's	(3000)	--
	Total	37,020	28800
	% of city's R.C. pop.	38	23

Figures in brackets refer to 1900 estimate.
-- parish not in existence

Source: for both Table 1 and Table 2, the estimates given in the Salford Diocesan Yearbook for those years.

Appendix 2. The Total Number of Irish-Born Living in Manchester and Salford 1841-1931.

Table 1. Manchester.

Year	Total population	No. Irish-born	% Irish-born
1841	242,983	30,304	12.5
1851	228,433	37,958	16.6
1861	243,988	33,604	13.8
1871	379,374	34,066	9.0
1881	341,414	25,566	7.5
1891	505,368	23,005	4.6
1901	543,872	19,838	3.6
1911	185,857	5,156	2.8
1921			2.3
1931	766,378	16,195	2.1

Table 2. Salford.

Year	Total population	No. Irish-born	% Irish-born
1841	53,200	3,996	7.5
1851	87,523	7,178	8.2
1861	105,335	9,191	8.7
1871			
1881	176,235	12,984	7.4
1891	198,139	9,265	4.7
1901	220,957	8,356	3.4
1911	186,966	5,660	3.0
1921			2.6
1931	223,438	4,725	2.1

Source: for both tables Census of Great Britain, 1841-1931.

Appendix 3. The Number and Proportion of Catholics in Certain Districts of Manchester and Salford.

Table 1. The proportion of Catholics living within boundaries of selected parishes, 1900.

Parish	Catholics	Non-Catholics	% Catholics
44. St.William's	2000	4000	50
37. St.Patrick's	12000	30000	40
22. St.Alban's	900	3000	30
36. St.Michael's	2318	10000	23
17. St.Augustine's	3900	20000	20
11. St.Anne's	6000	35000	17
29. St.John's	7500	45000	17
7. Mount Carmel	4667	30000	16
2. Corpus Christi	3057	20000	15
27. St.Francis'	5235	35000	15
25. St.Edmund's	5400	45000	12
28. St.James'	4800	40000	12
38. St.Peter's	2700	30000	9
26. St.Edward's	900	12000	8
3. English Martyrs'	652	13000	5
23. St.Cuthbert's	700	15000	5
16. St.Augustine's	247	10000	2

Source: estimates contained in the 1900 Lenten Visitation Returns for the Salford Diocese, available from the Bishop's House, Wardley Hall.

Table 2. Census of households in St.Michael's, Church of England, parish, Angel Meadow, c.late nineteenth century.

Church of England	31	38%
Catholic	45	56%
Dissenter	2	2%
Jew	3	4%
Total	81	100%

Source: M330/2/6, Manchester Archives Department.

Table 3. Census of households in St.Luke's, Church of England, parish, Chorlton-on-Medlock, c.early twentieth century.

Church of England	363	55%
Catholic	185	28%
Dissenter	108	16%
Jew	5	1%
Total	661	100%

Source: M100/1/7, Manchester Archives Department.

Table 4. Census of households in St.George's, Church of England, parish, Hulme, 1927.

Church of England	230	54%
Catholic	154	36%
Mixed	20	5%
Nonconformist	16	3%
Methodist	4	1%
Jew	2	1%
Total	426	100%

Source: M383/1/9/2, Manchester Archives Department.

Table 5. Census of remaining households after clearance in St.Andrew's, Church of England, parish, Ancoats, 1937.

Church of England	140	70%
Catholic	60	30%
Total	200	100%

Source: M45/1/14/1, Manchester Archives Department.

Table 6. Denominations of families with a church 'connection' in the Every St. area of Ancoats, 1938.

Roman Catholic	162	46%
Church of England	116	33%
Methodist	33	9%
Missions, etc	14	4%
Congregationalist, etc	9	3%
Salvation Army	5	1%
Mixed	14	4%
Total	353	100%

Source: Misc/847, Manchester Archives Department.

Table 7. Census of households in the Moston area by members of the New Moston Congregational Church, 1939.

Church of England	137	50%
Catholic	82	30%
Methodist	53	20%
Total	272	100%

Source: M274/2/1/1, Manchester Archives Department.

Appendix 4. Occupations in Certain Districts in Which the Irish Were Preponderant.

Table 1. Ancoats, 1889.

Unemployed	59	2%
Unskilled labour	1,055	42%
Superior labour	41	2%
Artisans	610	24%
Shopmen	104	4%
Cotton operatives	121	5%
Hawkers, street traders	142	5%
Dealers, small merchants, shopkeepers	167	7%
Miscellaneous	229	9%
Total	2,528	100%

Source: Fred Scott, 'The conditions and occupations of the people of Manchester and Salford', Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society, 1888-9.

Table 2. St.Michael's ward (area contiguous with Smithfield market), 1904

Unskilled labourers	62	68%
Hawkers, street traders	15	17%
Brokers	2	2%
Carters	7	8%
Shoemakers	5	5%
Total	91	100%

Source: T.R.Marr, *Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford*, (Manchester, 1904), p.61.

Table 3. Chorlton-on-Medlock, 1904.

Labourers	11	28%
Charwomen	7	18%
Carters	3	
Stonemasons	2	
Hawkers	2	
Wharehouse porters	2	
Watchman	1	
Bootmender	1	
Dyeworker	1	
Propertry repairer	1	54%
Iron driller	1	
Leather dresser	1	
Painter	1	
Plumber	1	
Tailor	1	
Blacksmith	1	
Box cutter	1	
Waste worker	1	
Total	39	100%

Source: T.R.Marr, Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford, (Manchester, 1904), p.67.

Table 4. Hulme, occupations of fathers, 1939.

Dead	36	15%
Unemployed	54	23%
Manual labour	44	18%
"At best" semi-skilled	106	44%
Total	240	100%

Source: H.E.O.James and F.T.Moore, 'Adolescent leisure in a working-class district', Occupational Psychology, vol.xiv, no.3, 1940.

Appendix 5. The Religion of Those Reliant upon the Poor Law.

Table 1. The religion of inmates of New Bridge St. workhouse, 1881-1914.

Year	Catholic	Anglican	Other	Total
1881	318 (52%)	275 (45%)	16 (3%)	609
1883	334 (51%)	304 (46%)	17 (3%)	655
1885	346 (51%)	316 (47%)	11 (2%)	673
1887	383 (54%)	304 (42%)	29 (4%)	718
1889	369 (50%)	362 (49%)	5 (1%)	741
1891	306 (50%)	300 (48%)	23 (3%)	629
1892	368 (51%)	336 (46%)	24 (3%)	728
1893	425 (57%)	311 (41%)	18 (2%)	746
1894	388 (50%)	360 (47%)	24 (3%)	772
1895	383 (49%)	377 (48%)	24 (3%)	784
1896	487 (52%)	432 (46%)	23 (2%)	942
1897	276 (49%)	271 (48%)	15 (3%)	562
1899	280 (52%)	243 (45%)	16 (3%)	539
1900	282 (53%)	236 (44%)	17 (3%)	535
1902	259 (49%)	256 (49%)	13 (2%)	528
1903	254 (47%)	258 (48%)	27 (5%)	539
1904	251 (45%)	281 (51%)	22 (4%)	554
1906	265 (44%)	321 (53%)	22 (3%)	608
1907	257 (44%)	301 (52%)	23 (4%)	581
1908	238 (49%)	234 (48%)	14 (3%)	486
1909	236 (46%)	246 (49%)	26 (5%)	508
1912	228 (47%)	240 (49%)	18 (4%)	486
1913	252 (52%)	220 (46%)	9 (2%)	481
1914	215 (49%)	311 (48%)	16 (3%)	442
Total	7,400 (50%)	7,004 (47%)	442 (3%)	14,486

Source: the religious creed registers, New Bridge St. workhouse, Manchester Township, (incomplete), M4/11/1-31, Manchester Archives Department.

Manchester Township covered all of Ancoats, Collyhurst, Angel Meadow and the city centre.

Table 2. Catholics in certain other public institutions, 1900.

	Catholics	Total	% Catholics
Chorlton workhouse	597	2751	22
Crumpsall workhouse	1182	3797	31
Salford workhouse	330	1500	22
Strangeways prison	450	1500	30

Source: 1900 Lenten Visitation Return.

Table 3. Religion of children adopted by the Guardians on the Manchester Union under their control, 1st January 1929.

Anglican	245	63%
Catholic	136	35%
Other	10	2%
Total	391	100%

Source: M4/20/13, Manchester Archives Department.

Appendix 6. The Proportion of Irish Priests in the Salford Diocese.

Table 1. Birthplace of priests working in the Salford Diocese.

	Irish	Continental	Salford[1]	Liverpool[1]	Other
1874-90					
Number	116	76	47	37	30
Percent.	38	25	15	12	10
1912-28					
Number	81	3	61	11	19
Percent.	46	2	35	6	11

[1] Born in the diocese of that name.

Table 2. Proportion of priests born and working in the Salford Diocese with an identifiably Irish surname.

	No. working in diocese	No. with Irish name	Percent.
1874-90	47	13	28
1912-28	61	22	36

Source: Melanie J.Tebbutt, The Evolution of Ethnic Stereotypes: an Examination of Stereotyping with Particular Reference to the Irish (and to a Lesser Extent the Scots), in Manchester During the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1982, Appendix D.

Appendix 7. The Salford Diocesan Census, 1900.

Table 1. The proportion of Catholics attending Easter Communion in Manchester parishes.

	Parish	Population	Number attending	% attending
9.	St.Alban's	900	742	82
5.	Holy Name	3300	2571	78
14.	St.Anne's	400	296	74
22.	St.Chad's	2000	1476	74
35.	St.Mary's	1200	750	63
2.	Corpus Christi	3057	1843	60
27.	St.Francis'	5235	3105	59
30.	St.Joseph's	1135	635	56
16.	St.Augustine's	247	131	53
10.	St.Aloysius'	2900	1500	52
13.	St.Anne's	850	439	52
38.	St.Peter's	2700	1286	48
43.	St.Wilfrid's	7500	3615	48
4.	Holy Family	3500	1640	47
29.	St.John's	7500	3364	45
1.	All Souls'	400	176	44
36.	St.Michael's	2318	1018	44
3.	English Martyrs'	652	275	42
23.	St.Cuthbert's	700	290	41
42.	St.Vincent's	1000	400	40
19.	St.Boniface's	1350	528	39
41.	St.Thomas'	1720	629	37
37.	St.Patrick's	12000	4300	36
40.	St.Sebastian's	1924	692	36
7.	Mount Carmel	4667	1453	31
11.	St.Anne's	6000	1800	30
28.	St.James'	4800	1376	29
34.	St.Mary's	558	160	29
6.	Mount Carmel	2300	654	28
26.	St.Edward's	850	250	27
25.	St.Edmund's	5400	1300	24
	Total	89063	38694	43

Figures underlined are the average of the 1899 and 1900 attendances.

Table 2. Average attendance at mid-week evening Mass.

Parish	Population	Number attending	% attending
14. St.Anne's	400	75	19
16. St.Augustine's	247	35	14
3. English Martyrs'	652	80	12
9. St.Alban's	900	105	12
36. St.Michael's	2318	250	11
13. St.Anne's	850	65	8
23. St.Cuthbert's	700	50	7
35. St.Mary's	1200	80	7
1. All Souls'	400	26	7
5. Holy Name	3300	200	6
38. St.Peter's	2700	150	6
34. St.Mary's	558	28	5
27. St.Francis'	5235	250	5
41. St.Thomas'	1720	80	5
40. St.Sebastian's	1924	80	4
29. St.John's	7500	300	4
42. St.Vincent's	1000	40	4
19. St.Boniface's	1350	50	4
25. St.Edmund's	5400	200	4
30. St.Joseph's	1135	40	4
4. Holy Family	3500	120	3
10. St.Aloyisius'	2900	100	3
37. St.Patrick's	12000	400	3
2. Corpus Christi	3057	90	3
26. St.Edward's	850	25	3
43. St.Wilfrid's	7500	200	3
11. St.Anne's	6000	100	2
44. St.William's	2000	8	0.4
Total	86763	3502	4.0

One or two caveats are required before a study is made of the two tables above. Firstly, and this also applies to the figures in Appendix 1, the estimates of the various parochial populations could have their accuracy questioned. These were arrived at by a variety of methods, some priests made a house-to-house census, others multiplied the number of baptisms by 22, whilst a few did both. Secondly, figures for the average attendance at evening Mass appear to be based upon the priest's impression of the numbers of those usually present. Therefore, it would be foolish to place too much faith in the precise accuracy of these figures. The St.Alban's return for Easter Communion is, nevertheless, the only one which stands out as being unusual. It is at least double that for other Ancoats' working class parishes and is the only working class parish of the top group four which recorded attendance levels over 70 per cent.

Appendix 8. Attendance to Easter duties, St.Wilfrid', Hulme, 1914-37.

Year	Number of attenders	Percentage
1914	3392	50
1915	2987	44
1916	3057	45
1917	3242	48
1918	3220	47
1919	3073	45
1920	3627	53
1921	4659	69
1922	3886	57
1923	3701	54
1924	3693	54
1925	4698	69
1926	3775	56
1927	3529	52
1928	3426	50
1929	3527	52
1930	4307	63
1931	3578	53
1932	3662	54
1933	3645	54
1934	4558	67
1935	3372	50
1936	3093	46
1937	2955	44

Figures underlined indicate a year in which a Mission took place.

It is extremely difficult to assess the true number of Catholics in St.Wilfrid's, or any other, parish in any one year. Although estimates annually appeared in the Salford Diocesan Almanac and the results of two censuses conducted in 1915 and 1921 appear in the parish log book, there is a wide disparity between all of them. According to these figures, the parochial population rises, falls and rises again for no apparent reason. There are a number of factors which would have influenced the size of the parish population. The First World War would account for a temporary decline whilst the creation of St.Lawrence's parish in 1926, which detached part of the parish would have made a more permanent dent in

numbers. During this period immigration would have been more than cancelled out by emigration as the middle class and skilled working class left the area and slum clearance also took effect.

Due to the erratic nature of the estimates I have decided to take no account of population change. A consistent figure has been arrived at, based upon the average for Almanac figures for 1910, 1920, 1930 and 1939 along with the censuses for 1915 and 1921. This puts the population at 6,800, coincidentally the 1910 estimate. Such a procedure will underestimate the population during the earlier part of the period whilst it will overestimate it by the end. Consequently this will somewhat underestimate the percentage of parishoners attending church as the period progresses, putting the later estimates increasingly on the conservative side.

Appendix 9. The Structure and Extent of Confraternity Membership in Certain Parishes.

Table 1. St.Wilfrid's confraternity structure.

	1899	1905	1910	1922
1. Holy Family	185	238	215	--
2. Guild of St.Sebastian	120	125	132	--
3. Children of Mary	250	197	248	--
4. Guild of Sacred Heart	120	63	96	--
5. Guild of St.Aloysius	100	130	140	--
Total	775	753	831	540
Percent. parish pop.	10	10	12	7

1. adult males, 2. adolescent males, 3. females over 14, 4. females over 14, 5. males under 14.

Source: St.Wilfrid's Log Book and the Catholic Whit Walk Official Programme.

Table 2. The extent of confraternity membership in selected parishes.

,	Year	No. conf. members	Percent parish pop.
St.Anne's, Ancoats	1910	490	8
	1922	550	8
	1925	690	9
St.Patrick's	1899	850	7
	1905	1245	10
	1910	2095	21
	1922	1895	19
	1925	1245	12
	1929*	1300	16
St.Augustine's, All Saints	1899	780	20
	1905	1040	26
	1910	1050	26
	1922	1300	22
	1930s*	810	14
Holy Name	1899	530	15
	1905	650	19
	1910	916	26
	1922	620	14

Asterixed figures derived from parochial censuses, deposited in individual parish boxes, Wardley Hall.

Source: Catholic Whit Walk Official Programme.

Appendix 10. St.Wilfrid's Cadre, 1910-11.

F.J.Amos	President, Catholic Young Mens' Society; Honorary Treasurer, Cricket Club
J.P.Carroll	Honorary Secretary, Cricket Club; member St.Vincent de Paul; member 1911 Carnival Committee
Vincent Corrigan	Catholic candidate, 1911 Board of Guardians' election; Officer, 1911 Bazaar
Arthur Davis	Catholic candiadte, 1908, 1911 Board of Guardians' election; Honorary Secretary, 1911 Bazaar Committee
W.B.Dillon	Honorary Secretary Cycling Club; Warden, Catholic Young Mens' Society
E.Fielding	Chairman, Guild of St.Aloysius; member, Catholic Young Mens' Society Committee; Sacristan
Joseph Hampson	Member, Executive Committee 1910 Bazaar; Speaker at 1911 Bazaar; "notable benefactor", donated a communion rail; one son a priest, the other a "promising layman"; daughter-in-law member 1911 Carnival Committee
J.Kerrs	Secretary, Guild of St.Aloysius; member, Catholic Young Mens' Society Committee
A.Mackay	Member, Old Boys' Association Committee, Catholic Young Mens' Society Committee, Cricket Club Committee, 1911 Summer Carnival Committee
R.Martin	Chairman, St.Vincent de Paul, Guild of St.Sebastian, 1911 Bazaar Committee, 1911 Board of Guardians' Election Committee; active in Old Boys' Association
J.Murray	Secretary, Guild of St.Sebastian; active in St.Vincent de Paul
Thomas Seaston	Headmaster of School; Church organist and choirmaster; Vice President, Catholic Young Mens' Society; President, 1911 Bazaar Committee;
F.Yarwood	Chairman, Rambling Club; Warden, Catholic Young Mens' Society; Member, 1911 Summer carnival Committee; active, St.Vincent de Paul

Source: St.Wilfrid's Log Book and Parish Magazine, Harvest and the Manchester Catholic Herald.

Appendix 11. Companies and Membership of the Catholic Boys' Brigade and Scouts in Manchester, 1919-33.

Table 1. Parishes with a Scout troop or Boys Brigade company, 1919.

Scouts	Mount Carmel, Ordsall
	St.Anne's, Ancoats
	St.Augustine's, All Saints
	St.Chad's
	St.Edward's
	St.Francis'
	St.Mary's, Manchester
	St.Willibrod's
Boys' Brigades	Corpus Christi
	Holy Name
	St.Augustine's, Chorlton-cum-Hardy
	St.Edmund's

Source: Harvest, July 1919.

Table 2. Parishes with Scout troops, 1927-33.

	1927/8		1932/3	
	Boys	Officers	Boys	Officers
English Martyrs'	45	3	--	--
Holy Name	68	4	76	9
Mount Carmel, Ordsall	44	4	--	--
St.Augustine's, M/cr	--	--	74	6
St.Anne's, Ancoats	40	2	59	3
St.Edmund's	69	3	--	--
St.Patrick's	77	6	50	7
Total	363	22	259	25

Source: Harvest, May 1928, November 1933.

Appendix 12. The Occupational Structure of Manchester, Salford and Liverpool for Males Over 10 Years of Age, 1911.

Table 1. Manchester.

Metals (x)	55,997	24%
Transport (vi)	46,484	20%
Commercial (v)	30,702	13%
Textiles (xviii)	23,081	10%
Construction (xii)	20,643	9%
Food (xx)	18,546	8%
Total	231,204	84%

Table 2. Salford.

Transport (vi)	16,330	22%
Metals (x)	15,120	20%
Textiles (xviii)	12,152	16%
Commercial (v)	6,522	9%
Construction (xii)	5,574	8%
Food (xx)	5,480	7%
Total	74,286	82%

Table 3. Liverpool.

Transport (vi)	74,963	33%
Food (xx)	23,580	11%
Metals (x)	21,580	10%
Commercial (v)	20,823	9%
Construction (xii)	18,291	8%
Wood (xiii)	7,559	3%
Total	224,584	74%

Source: Census of England and Wales, 1911.

Appendix 13. The Number of Catholic Schoolchildren in Manchester.

Table 1. Number on rolls of public elementary schools in Manchester, 1905-38.

Type of school	1905	1915	1925	1935	1938
Catholic	13,467 (13%)	18,921 (15%)	20,029 (18%)	21,259 (20%)	18,274 (20%)
Anglican	37,512 (35%)	31,388 (25%)	27,855 (24%)	21,268 (20%)	16,696 (18%)
Municipal	52,179 (48%)	72,078 (58%)	65,207 (57%)	64,420 (59%)	55,561 (61%)
Other	4,467 (4%)	2,450 (2%)	1,280 (1%)	1,216 (1%)	1,031 (1%)
Total	107,573	124,837	114,371	108,163	92,022

Source: D.Barber, School Accomodation Problems in Manchester, 1919-39, M.Ed, University of Manchester, 1960, p.18 and Appendix C.1.

Table 2. Public elementary school accomodation in Ancoats and Hulme, 1905.

Area	Catholic	Anglican	Municipal	Weslyan
Ancoats	4,054 (48%)	3,260 (38%)	1,165 (14%)	--
Nth M/cr	6,276 (30%)	8,916 (42%)	4,534 (22%)	1,182 (6%)
Nth Hulme	2,559 (26%)	5,242 (54%)	1,984 (20%)	--
Hulme	2,559 (13%)	7,901 (42%)	8,424 (45%)	--

'Ancoats' is bounded by Great Ancoats St., Miller St., Butler St., Reather St. and Rochdale Rd., plus Angel Meadow.
'North Manchester' is bounded by Great Ancoats St., Every St., Hulme Hall Lane and Collyhurst Rd.
'North Hulme' refers to the area north of Stretford Rd.
'Hulme' refers to the area both north and south of Stretford Rd.

Source: Manchester Council Proceedings, 1904-5, volume 3, map and list of available school accomodation.

Appendix 14. Membership of the Catholic Federation, 1908-28.

Table 1. Total Membership in Manchester and Salford.

		1908	1919	1921	1923	1925	1928
1.	All Souls	20		150	151	101	103
2.	C. Christi	100	313	290	190	213	187
3.	Eng. Martyrs		160	220	227		280
5.	Holy Name	500	250				
6.	Mnt. Carmel	46					
7.	Mnt. Carmel	36					
9.	St.Albans	24		226			
11.	St.Annes	40		580		940	956
14.	St.Annes	39					
15.	St.Anthonys	30					
16.	St.Augustines	50		62			
17.	St.Augustines	200			123		
19.	St.Bonifaces	121	100	L			
20.	St.Bridgets	130					
22.	St.Chads			151			
23.	St.Cuthberts	40		L			
24.	St.Dunstans		45				
25.	St.Edmunds	14	914	763			
26.	St.Edwards	64					
27.	St.Francis	75		703	381	425	465
28.	St.James	25	230	320	229	265	142
29.	St.Johns	500	1312	1027	715	718	827
30.	St.Josephs	82		127			
31.	St.Josephs	45	426	415	414		
34.	St.Marys	75	147	90	200	67	63
35.	St.Marys	18	140	171	180	197	171
36.	St.Michaels	250	179	192	200	218	
37.	St.Patricks	128		84		100	
38.	St.Peters	40				269	
40.	St.Sebastians	110					
41.	St.Thomas	48	425			555	400
42.	St.Vincent			247			20
43.	St.Wilfrid	45					
45.	St.Willibrod Central		300	291	140	180	62
	Total	2895	4941	6129	3150	4248	3676

L branch known to have lapsed.

Table 2. Proportion of Total Membership Drawn From the Parishes of St.Anne's, Ancoats, St.Francis', St.John's and St.Thomas.

Year	Members	% of Total
1908	663	23
1919	1737	34
1920	2279	39
1921	2310	38
1922	2355	43
1923	1096	35
1925	2638	61
1926	2518	72
1928	2648	72

Source: 1908 figures derived from the Federation file, Wardley Hall; figures for all other years drawn from the Federationist

Appendix 15. The Background of Oral Respondents.

The oral history source consulted in this work was that found at the Manchester Studies Unit, Manchester Polytechnic. Unfortunately, the Unit does not now exist but the collection is fortunately still available for use. This is an important collection which seems to have been under-used compared to the one housed at the University of Essex. This Appendix gives the available information about the background of respondents although the tapes do not tell us everything. Where possible the following salient facts are listed: sex, date of birth, area of birth, church attended, religion, how far descended from Irish-born, father's occupation or own occupation if relevant and whether the respondent was born within a mixed marriage. Details are also given of the very small sample of interviewees undertaken during the course of this research. These latter tapes will, in due course, be deposited with the Manchester Polytechnic collection.

1. Manchester Studies Respondents.

Tape no.

60 Male, b.1895, Hulme, St.Wilfrid's, third generation. Father a foreman on the Manchester Ship Canal.

82 Male, b.1907, Horwich, second generation. Father a policeman.

85(2) Male, b.c.1900, Salford, third generation. A priest.

85, 268(2) Female, b.1899, Moss Side, Holy Name, second generation. Father an insurance salesman.

87, 272(2) Female, b.1910, Ancoats, St.Alban's, third generation. From a mixed marriage.

115 Male and female, b.c.1901, Collyhurst and Angel Meadow.

112(2) Male, b.1893, west coast of Ireland. A building labourer.

165(1) Female, b.1907, Collyhurst. Father an engineer and owned a corner shop. From a mixed marriage.

266 Female, b.c.1905, Armagh. A domestic servant.

271 Female, b.1901, Galway. A domestic servant.

273 Female, b.1910, Hulme, St.Augustine's. Father a labourer.

274(1) Female, b.c.1910. A nun.

457 Male, b.1901, Ancoats, St.Patrick's. Father a tramworker.

469 Male, b.1908, Ordsall. From a mixed marriage.

478 Male, b.1926, Ordsall, non-Catholic. Father a cattle driver.

484 Female, b.1914, Ordsall, non-Catholic.
558

486 Male, b.1904, Ancoats, St.Michael's.

487(1) Male, b.c.1921, Ordsall, Mount Carmel. Father an engineer.
487(2)

491(1) Male, b.1893, Ordsall, non-Catholic.

492 Male, b.1914, Knott Mill, non-Catholic.

493 Female, b.1902, Ordsall, non-Catholic.

507 Female, b.1905, Salford, Mount Carmel, second generation. Father a tailor.

509 Female, b.1924, Ordsall, non-Catholic.

512 Male, b.1910, Ordsall, non-Catholic. Father a general labourer.

516 Female, b.1895, Ordsall, non-Catholic. Family ran a corner shop.

518 Female, b.c.1900, Ancoats, St.Anne's. Father a tram worker.

530 Female, b.c.1916, Ordsall, non-Catholic.

531(1) Female, b.1919, Ordsall, non-Catholic.

540 Male, b.c.late 1900s, Ordsall, St.Joseph's. Father a clerk.

544 Female, b.1913, Ordsall, Mount Carmel.

548 Female, b.1906, Ordsall, Mount Carmel. Father a dockworker.

556 Female, b.1903, Ordsall, non-Catholic.
557

584 Female, b.1897, Salford, second generation. Father a taxidermist and anarchist.

734 Male and female, b.1900-17, Trafford Park, St.Anthony's.
745

774(2) Female, b.1904, non-Catholic.

760 Female, b.1900, Collyhurst. Father a cobbler.

780 Male, b.1900, Trafford Park, non-Catholic.

787(4) Male, b.1923, Hulme, Holy Name.

794 Female, b.c.1901, Ancoats, second generation. Father a tramguard.

821 Male, b.c.1900, Trafford Park, St.Anthony's.

823(1) Female, b.1890, Fairfields, St.Anne's, second generation.
823(2) Father a labourer.

1016 Male, b.1907, Miles Platting, non-Catholic.

1024 Male, b.1928, Hulme, St.Wilfrid's, third generation. Father a labourer.

Crawley Transcript Female, b.1898, Armagh. A domestic servant.

2. Interviewees.

'Miss R.' Female, b.1914, County Limerick, Holy Name. Father a manager of employment exchange.

'Mr.O.' Male, b.1913, Ardwick, Holy Name. Father a paver.

'Mr.M' Male, b.1921, County Wexford, St.Anne's, Ancoats. A presser in a rubber works.

'Sisters' Female, b.1901, 1902, Ancoats, St.Patrick's, third generation. Father a inspector of vegetables, Smithfield Market.

Bibliography.

1. Catholic Records.

i) Salford Diocesan Archive, Wardley Hall, Swinton

Bishop Casartelli's diary

1900 Lenten Visitation returns

Acta Salfordensia, 1905-22

Societies file

Catholic Federation file

Parish boxes

Centre Labour party manifesto

Salford Diocesan Almanac, 1890-1939

ii) School Log Books

St.Anne's, Ancoats, Infant School Log Book, available from the school.

St.Edward's School Log Book, available from the school.

St.Michael's School Log Book, available from Manchester Archives Department, Manchester Central Library [herafter MAD], M66/133/Box 1.

iii) Parish Log Books

Holy Family Parish Log Book, available from the church.

St.Wilfrid's Parish Log Book, available from the church.

iv) Parish Magazines

Corpus Christi Parish Magazine, Local History Department, Manchester Central Library [hereafter LHD].

Holy Name Messenger, available from the church.

St.Wilfrid's Parish Magazine, available from the church.

v) Parish Histories

Anon, The Story of Saint Anne's, Ancoats (Manchester, 1948).

Anon, St.Anne's 1917-38. Souvenir Brochure of the Twenty First Anniversary of St.Anne's Crumpsall (Manchester, 1938).

Anon, St.Patrick's Silver Jubilee Souvenir (Manchester, 1961).

vi) Miscellaneous

The Authorised Official Programme of the Catholic Whitsuntide Procession, 1893-1939, LHD.

2. Political Records.

i) Labour Party

Labour Party National Executive minutes.

Manchester and Salford (after 1920 Manchester (Borough)) Labour Party, Annual Reports, Working Class Movement Library [hereafter WCML], Salford.

Salford Central Labour Party minutes, WCML.

Tom Regan, 'Labour members of the City Council *(1894-1965)*', *MAD*, BRF/352/04273/RE1.

ii) Liberal Party

General Council, Manchester Liberal Union minutes, MAD, M283/1/1/3.

General Council, Manchester Liberal Federation minutes, MAD, M283/1/4/1.

North West Manchester Liberal Association minutes, MAD, M283/4/1/1.

Miles Platting Ward, Liberal Council minutes, MAD, M283/3.

St.Luke's Ward, Liberal Council minutes, MAD, 283/5.

iii) Miscellaneous

Irish Question Collection, London School of Economics [hereafter LSE].

Local Fabian Society Collection, LSE.

3. Censuses.

Census of England and Wales, 1841-1931.

Religious census, St.Michael's, Church of England parish, Angel Meadow, c.late nineteenth century, MAD, M330/2/6.

Census for St.Luke's Church of England parish, Chorlton-on-Medlock, early twentieth century, MAD, M100/1/7.

Census by members of St.George's, Church of England parish, Hulme, 1927, MAD, M383/1/9/2.

Visiting done during the Mission 1937. Streets left after clearance completed. St.Andrew's, Church of England parish, Ancoats, MAD, M45/14/1.

Canvas of Moston area by the New Moston Congregational Church in 1939, MAD, M274/2/1/1.

4. Miscellaneous Records.

i) Public Records Office

CAB 24

LAB 2, 101

ASSI 52

ii) Manchester Polytechnic

Manchester Studies Photographic Collection.

Manchester Studies Oral History Collection.

iii) Greater Manchester Police Museum

Watch Committee minutes

Manchester explosives trial cuttings.

iv) Manchester Archives Department, Manchester Central Library

M.Fitzgerald, 'Ancoats clearance area. Sociological study,May 1937 to March 1938, Misc./847.

St.Andrews, Church of England parish, Ancoats, statistical returns on parochial work, 1894-1903, M45/1/6/1-3.

v) Local History Library, Manchester Central Library

'Manchester' cuttings collection

Manchester City Council Reports

5. Newspapers and Contemporary Journals.

Catholic Federationist (later Federationist)

Clarion

Daily Dispatch

Evening Chronicle

Harvest

Labour Leader

Labour's Northern Voice

London Catholic Herald

Manchester Citizen (later Manchester Catholic Herald and then Catholic Herald (Western Edition))

Manchester City News

Manchester Council Proceedings

Manchester Courier

Manchester Evening Chronicle

Manchester Evening News

Manchester Faces and Places

Manchester Guardian

Manchester Saturday Half Penny

Salford City Reporter

Tablet

The Times

6. Works of Reference and Bibliographies.

T.S.Ashton, Economic and Social Investigations in Manchester 1833-1933 (Manchester, 1934).

F.W.S.Craig, British Parliamentary Election Results 1918-49 (1969).

British Parliamentary Elections 1885-1918 (1974)

N.J.Frangopulo (ed.), A Rich Inheritance (Manchester, 1962).

John A.Hardon, Catholic Dictionary (1981).

Irish in Britain History Group, The History of the Irish in Britain. A Bibliography (1986).

Slater's Street Directory of Manchester and Salford (1909)

Stephan Thernstrom (ed.), The Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups (Cambridge, Mass, 1980)

Paul Thompson, Voices of the Past: Oral History (1978).

A.R.Wright and T.E.Jones, British Calender Customs. England, volume one, (1936).

7. Autobiographies, Biographies and Reminiscencies.

Tom Barclay, Memoirs and Medleys (1934).

Brendan Behan, Borstal Boy (1958).

Ernie Benson, To Struggle is to Live, volume one (1979).

Mary Bertenshaw, Sunrise to Sunset (Manchester, 1980).

Mary Bentley, Born 1896 (Swinton, 1985).

L.W.Brady, T.P.O'Connor and the Liverpool Irish (1983).

Anthony Burgess, Big Wilson and Little God. Being the First Part of the Confessions of Anthony Burgess (1987).

Mick Burke, Ancoats Lad (Swinton, 1985).

J.R.Clynes, Memoirs, two volumes (1937).

William Doherty, Reminiscences of Old Manchester and Salford Telling How We Kept Whitsuntide Sixty Years Ago ... By an Octogenarian (Manchester, 1887).

Frank Doran, Down Memory Lane (deposited LHD).

Charles Forman, Industrial Town (1979).

Edward George, From Mill Boy to Minister (1919).

Walter Greenwood, There Was a Time (1967).

Ruth Hall, Marie Stopes. A Biography (1977).

J.L.Hammond, C.P.Scott (1934).

Kenneth Harris, Atlee (1982).

Richard Heaton, Salford, My Home Town (Swinton, 1985).

Richard Hoggart, The Uses of Literacy (1963).

Douglas Hyde, I Believed. The Autobiography of a Former Communist (1952).

H.M.Hyndman, Further Reminiscences (1912).

Bart Kennedy, Slavery: Pictures from the Abyss (1905).

E.A.Knox, Reminiscences of an Octogenarian 1847-1934 (1935).

Maurice Levine, Cheetham to Cordova (Swinton, 1984).

Jill Liddington, The Life and Times of a Respectable Rebel, Selina Cooper (1864-1946), (1984).

Margaret McCarthy, Generation in Revolt (1953).

Arthur McCormack, Cardinal Vaughan (1966).

City of Manchester Cultural Services, I Remember 1952 (Manchester, 1977).

C.C.Martindale, Charles Dominic Plater (1922).

Father Bernard Vaughan: a Memoir (1923).

Geoffrey Mitchell (ed.), The Hard Way Up. The Autobiography of Hannah Mitchell (1968).

Ernest Oldmeadow, Francis, Cardinal Bourne two volumes (1940).

William O'Malley, Glancing Back (1933).

Elsie Oman, Salford Stepping Stones (Swinton, 1983).

Pat O'Mara, The Autobiography of a Liverpool Irish Slummy (1934).

Elsie Osman, For the Love of Ada ... and Salford (1984).

Arthur Potts, Whitsters Lane (1985).

Neil Richardson, The Pubs of Old Ancoats (Swinton, 1987).

Sue Richardson (ed.), The Recollections of Three Manchesters in the Great War (Swinton, 1987).

Fred Roberts, Memories of a Victorian Childhood and Working Life in Miles Platting, Manchester (Swinton, 1983).

Robert Roberts, Classic Slum (1983).

A Ragged Schooling (1984).

Charles Rowley, Fifty Years of Ancoats, Loss and Gain (1899).

Fifty Years of Work Without Wages (1912).

F.Sheehy-Skeffington, Michael Davitt: Revolutionary Agitator and Labour Leader (1908).

H.E.Sheen, Canon Peter Green (1965).

J.T.Sluggs, Reminiscences of Manchester Fifty Years Ago (Manchester, 1881).

J.G.Snead-Cox, The Life of Cardinal Vaughan, two volumes, (1910).

Mary Stocks, Fifty Years of Every Street (1945).

Ben Tillett, Memories and Reflections (1931).

Joseph Toole, Fighting Through Life (1935).

Millie Toole, Our Old Man (1948).

Mary Turner, Collyhurst Then (deposited LHD).

Barbara Vaughan, Growing Up in Salford (Swinton, 1983).

Harry Watkins, From Hulme All Blessings Flow (Swinton, 1985).

8. Published Books and Articles.

Harold J.Abrahamson, Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America (1973).

A.J.Ainsworth, 'Religion in the working class community and the evolution of socialism in late nineteenth century Lancashire: a case of working class consciousness, Histoire Sociale, vol.x, 1977.

Anon, A History of the Heyrod Street Lads' Club, 1889-1910 (Manchester, 1911).

Walter L.Arnstein, 'The Murphy Riots: a Victorian dilemma', Victorian Studies, vol.xix, no.1, 1975.

Bernard Aspinall, 'The welfare state within the state: the Saint Vincent De Paul Society in Glasgow 1848-1920', in W.J.Shiels and Diana Woods (eds.), Voluntary Religion. Studies in Church History, vol.xxiii, (1986).

Rodney Barker, Education and Politics 1900-1951. A Study of the Labour Party (Oxford, 1972).

A.C.F.Beales, 'The struggle for the schools', in G.A.Beck (ed.), The English Catholics 1850-1950 (1950).

Frank Bealey, 'Negotiations between the Liberal party and the Labour Representation Committee before the General Election of 1906', Institute of Historical Research Bulletin, vol.xxix, 1956.

F.Bealey and H.Pelling, Labour and Politics 1900-1906 (1958).

Neil Betten, 'The Great Depression and the activities of the Catholic Workers' movement', Labor History, vol.xii, 1971.

G.F.A.Best, 'Popular Protestantism in Victorian Britain', in R.Robson (ed.), Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain (1967).

Michael Blanch, 'Imperialism, nationalism and organised youth', in John Clarke, Chas Chrichter, Richard Johnson (eds.), Working Class Culture. Studies in History and Theory (1979).

Neal Blewett, 'The franchise in the United Kingdom 1885-1918', Past and Present no.32, 1965.

The Peers, the Parties and the People (1972).

J.M.Bochel and D.T.Denver, 'Religion and voting: a critical review and a new analysis', Political Studies, 18, 1970.

C.A.Bolton, Salford Diocese and its Catholic Past (Manchester, 1950).

Charles Booth, Life and Labour of the People in London. Third Series: Religious Influences. Summary (1903).

Life and Labour of the People of London. Final Volume. Notes on Social Influences and Conclusion (1904).

John Bossy, The English Catholic Community, 1550-1850 (1975).

F.Boulard, translated by M.J.Jackson, An Introduction to Religious Sociology (1960).

H.V.Brasted, 'Irish Nationalism and the British Empire in the late nineteenth century', in Oliver MacDonagh, W.E.Mandle and Pauric Travers (eds.), Irish Culture and Nationalism 1750-1950 (1983).

Thomas N.Brown, Irish-American Nationalism 1870-1890 (Westport, 1980)

Colin Bundy and Dermot Healey, 'Aspects of urban poverty', Oral History, vol.vi, no.1, 1978.

D.Butler and D.Stokes, Political Change in Britain (1974).

P.W.Campbell and A.H.Birch, 'Politics in the north-west', Manchester School, vol.xviii, 1950.

David Cannadine, 'British history; past, present - and future?', Past and Present, no.116, 1987.

Charles F.Carter, 'Youth work in Manchester', Social Welfare, vol.iv, no.6, October 1940.

L.C.Casartelli, Sketches in History, (1906).

Judith F.Champ, 'Bishop Milner, Holywell and the cure tradition', in W.J.Shiels (ed.), The Church and Healing. Studies in Church History, vol.xix, (1982).

S.J.Chapman and H.M.Hallsworth, Unemployment. The Results of an Investigation Made in Lancashire and an Examination of the Report of the Poor Law Commission (Manchester, 1909).

Dennis M.Clarke, The Irish in Philadelphia (Philadelphia, 1973).

P.F.Clarke, Lancashire and the New Liberalism, (Cambridge, 1971).

'The Progressive movement in England', Royal Historical Society Transactions, 5th series, vol.xxiv, 1974.

'Liberals, Labour and the franchise', English Historical Review, vol.xcii, 1977.

H.Clay and K.R.Brady, Manchester at Work. A Survey, (Manchester, 1929).

Hugh Clegg, A History of British Trade Unionism Since 1889. Volume II, 1911-39 (Oxford, 1985).

Peter Coman, Catholics and the Welfare State (1977).

Conference report, 'Irish migrants and English labour', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin, no.37, 1966.

Conference report, 'Responses to migrant labour', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin, no.37, 1978.

G.P.Connolly, 'Little brother be at peace: the priest as Holy Man in the nineteenth century ghetto', in Shiels, The Church and Healing.

'The Catholic Church and the first Manchester and Salford trade unions in the age of the industrial revolution', Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society Transactions, vol.xvic, 1985.

'Irish and Catholic: myth or reality? Another sort of Irish and the renewal of the clerical profession amongst Catholics in England 1791-1918', in Roger Swift and Sheridan Gilley, The Irish in the Victorian City (Beckenham, 1985).

J.Rooke Corbett, 'Recent electoral statistics', Manchester Statistical Society Transactions, 1906-7.

Hugh Cunningham, 'The language of patriotism 1750-1914', History Workshop Journal, no.12, 1981.

L.P.Curtis, Anglo-Saxons and Celts (1968).

R.S.W.Davies, 'The Liverpool Labour party and the Liverpool working class 1900-39', North West Labour History Society Bulletin, no.6, 1979-80.

S.J.Davies, 'Classes and the police in Manchester 1829-1880', in Alan J.Kidd and K.W.Roberts (eds.), City, Class and Culture (Manchester, 1985).

D.W.Dean, 'The difficulties of a Labour education policy: the failure of the Trevelyan Bill 1929-31', British Journal of Educational Studies, vol.xvii, 1969.

John Denvir, The Irish in Britain from Earliest Times to the Fall and Death of Parnell (1892).

The Life Story of an Old Rebel (Dublin, 1910).

A.E.Dingle and B.H.Harrison, 'Cardinal Manning as a temperance reformer', Historical Journal, vol.xii, 1969.

Jay Dolan, The Immigrant Church (Baltimore, 1975).

Peter Doyle, 'The Catholic Federation 1906-29', in Shiels and Woods, Voluntary Religion.

J.Dunsmore Clarkson, Labour and Nationalism in Ireland (New York, 1929).

Mark Ebery and Brian Preston, Domestic Service in Late Victorian England 1871-1914 , Geographical Papers, number 42, (University of Reading, 1976).

Economics Research Section, University of Manchester, Re-Adjustment in Lancashire (Manchester, 1936).

Todd M.Endelman, The Jews of Georgian England 1714-1830: Tradition and Change in a Liberal Society (1979).

Frederick Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England (1979).

H.J.Eysenck, 'Primary social attitudes as related to social class and political party', British Journal of Sociology, vol.ii, no.3, 1951.

Letitia Fairfield, The Trial of Peter Barnes. The IRA Coventry Explosion of 1939 (1953).

David Feldman, 'There was an Englishman, an Irishman and a Jew ... immigrants and minorities in Britain', Historical Journal, vol.xxvi, no.1, 1983.

Steve Fielding, 'The Catholic Whit-walk in Manchester and Salford, 1890-1939', Manchester Region History Review, vol.i, no.1, 1987.

Frances Finnegan, Poverty and Prejudice: a Study of Irish Immigrants in York 1840-75 (Cork, 1982).

David Fitzpatrick, 'Irish emigration in the later nineteenth century', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xxii, no.86, 1982.

John Foster, Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution (1974).

Ronald Frankenberg, Communities in Britain. Social Life in Town and Country (1970).

Joshua B.Freeman, 'Irish workers in the twentieth century United States: the case of the Transport Workers' Union', Saothar, no.8, 1982.

Maurice French, 'Roman Catholics and the Labour party: an early conflict in South Australia', Labour History, no.32, 1978.

Ruth and Eddie Frow, To Make That Future - Now! (Manchester, 1976).

Tom Gallagher, 'A tale of two cities. Communal strife in Glasgow and Liverpool before 1914', in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City.

Glasgow. The Uneasy Peace. Religious Tension in Modern Scotland (Manchester, 1987).

Robert Garner, 'Local Labour parties in Manchester and Salford and the Communist Question in the 1920s', Manchester Region History Review, vol.ii, no.1, 1988.

A.D.George and Sylvia C.Clark, 'A note on "Little Ireland", Manchester', Industrial Archaeology, vol.xiv, no.1, 1979.

Sheridan Gilley, 'Catholic faith of the Irish slums. London 1840-70', in H.Y.Dyos and Michaels Wolff (eds.), The Victorian City: Images and Realities (1973).

'English attitudes to the Irish in England 1780-1900', in Colin Holmes (ed.), Immigrants and Minorities in British Society (1978).

'Catholics and socialists in Glasgow 1906-12', in K.Lunn (ed.), Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities (1980).

'The Roman Catholic Church and the nineteenth century Irish diaspora', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.xxxv, 1984.

'Pearse's sacrifice: Christ and Cuchulain crucified and risen in the Easter Rising 1916', in Jim Obelkevich, Lyndal Roper, Raphael Samuel, Disciplines of Faith. Studies in Religion, Politics and Patriarchy (1987).

Diana Gittins, Fair Sex. Family Size and Structure 1900-39 (1982).

Emily Glencross, Memories of a Salford Childhood (Swinton, 1983).

Sean Glynn, 'Irish immigration to Britain 1911-51: patterns and policy', Irish Economic and Social History, 1981.

R.Q.Gray, 'Religion, culture and social class in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Edinburgh', in Geoffrey Crossick (ed.), The Lower Middle Class in Britain, 1870-1914 (1977).

Geoffrey Green, There's Only One United (1978).

R.L.Greenall, 'Popular Conservatism in Salford', Northern History, vol. viii, 1974.

Clive Griggs, 'Labour and education', in K.D.Brown (ed.), The First Labour Party 1906-1914 (Beckenham, 1985).

Herbert G.Gutman, 'Work, culture and society in industrialising America, 1815-1919', American Historical Review, vol.lxxiix, 1973.

D.A.Hamer, Liberal Politics in the Age of Gladstone and Rosebery (Oxford, 1972).

J.E.Handley, The Irish in Modern Scotland (Cork, 1947).

H.J.Hanham, 'Politics and community life in Victorian and Edwardian Britain', Folk Life, vol.iv, 1966.

Elections and Party Management (1978).

Brian Harrison, 'Religion and recreation in nineteenth century England', Past and Present, no.38, 1967.

Paul Harrison, 'The Irish English', in Paul Barker (ed.), The Other Britain (1982).

John Haslett and W.J.Lowe, 'Household structure and overcrowding among the Lancashire Irish 1851-1871', Histoire Sociale, vol.x, no.19, 1977.

Adrian Hastings, 'Some reflections on the English Catholicism of the late 1930s', in Hastings (ed.), Bishops and Writers. Aspects of the Evolution of Modern English Catholicism (Wheathampstead, 1977).

Gerald Berkeley Hertz, *The Manchester Politician 1750-1912 (1912)*.

T.W.Heyck, 'Home Rule, Radicalism and the Liberal party 1886-1895', Journal of British Studies, vol.xiii, no.2, 1974.

John Hickey, Urban Catholics (1967).

Jeffrey Hill, 'Early development of the Independent Labour party', International Review of Social History, vol.xxvi,1981.

Eric Hobsbawm, Primitive Rebels (Manchester, 1971).

Industry and Empire (1975).

'The forward march of Labour halted?', in Martin Jacques and Francis Mulhearn (eds.), The Forward March of Labour Halted? (1981).

'Working classes and nations', Saothar, no.8, 1982.

'The making of the working class, 1870-1914', in Eric Hobsbawm, Worlds of Labour. Further Studies in the History of Labour (1984).

'The formation of British working class culture', in Hobsbawm, Worlds of Labour.

J.Derek Holmes, More Roman than Rome: English Catholics in the Nineteenth Century (1978).

Michael P.Hornsby-Smith, Roman Catholics in England. Studies in Social Structure Since the Second World War (Cambridge, 1987).

Christopher Howard, 'Expectations born to death: local Labour party expansion in the 1920s', in Jay Winter (ed.), The Working Class in Modern British History (Cambridge, 1983).

C.H.D.Howard, 'The Parnell Manifesto of 21 November, 1885, and the Schools Question', English Historical Review, vol.lxii, 1947.

David Howell, British Workers and the Independent Labour Party 1888-1906 (Manchester, 1983).

'Was the Labour party inevitable?', North West Labour History Bulletin, no.10, 1984-85.

A Lost Left. Three Studies in Socialism and Nationalism (Manchester, 1986).

P.Hughes, 'English Catholics in 1850', in Beck, English Catholics.

Stephen Humphries, Hooligans or Rebels? An Oral History of Working Class Childhood and Youth 1889-1939 (Oxford, 1981).

E.H.Hunt, Regional Wage Variations in Britain 1850-1914 (1973).

British Labour History 1815-1914 (1981).

I.G.C.Hutchison, 'Glasgow's working class politics', in R.A.Cage (ed.), The Working Class in Glasgow 1750-1914 (Beckenham, 1987).

Information on Ireland, Nothing But the Same Old Story. The Roots of Anti-Irish Racism (1984).

K.S.Inglis, 'Patterns of religious worship in 1851', Journal of Ecclesiastical History, vol.xi, no.1, 1960.

Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England (1964).

John Inman, Poverty and Housing Conditions in a Manchester Ward (Manchester, 1934).

J.A.Jackson, The Irish in Britain (1963).

H.E.O.James and F.T.Moore, 'Adolescent leisure in a working class district', Occupational Psychology, vol.xiv, no.3, 1940.

James B.Jeffries, The Story of the Engineers 1800-1945, (1970).

Mick Jenkins, What Next for Manchester? (Manchester, 1938).

David Caradog Jones (ed.), The Social Survey of Merseyside, three volumes, (Liverpool, 1934).

Grace A.Jones, 'Further thoughts on the franchise', Past and Present, no.34, 1966.

Gareth Stedman Jones, Outcast London (1984).

Languages of Class (Cambridge, 1984).

Mervyn Jones, Potbank. A Social Enquiry into Life in the Potteries (1961).

Patrick Joyce, Work, Society and Politics (1980).

Stephen G.Jones, Workers at Play (1986).

Tony Judt, 'A clown in regal purple: social history and the historians', History Workshop Journal, no.7, 1979.

J.H.S.Kent, 'The role of religion in the cultural structure of the later Victorian city', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th Series, vol.xxiii, 1973.

Neville Kirk, 'Ethnicity, class and popular Toryism 1850-70', in Lunn, Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities

W.R.Lambert, 'Some working class attitudes towards organised religion in nineteenth century Wales', Llafur, vol.ii, 1976.

Peter Lane, The Catenian Association (1982).

Emmet Larkin, 'The devotional revolution in Ireland 1850-75', American Historical Review, vol.lxxvii, 1972.

Felix Lavery (ed.), Irish Heroes in the War (1917).

Great Irishmen in War and Politics (1920).

Lynn Hollen Lees, Exiles of Erin (Manchester, 1979).

Edward M.Levine, The Irish and the Irish Politician (Notre Dame, 1966).

Jane Lewis, The Politics of Motherhood. Child and Maternal Welfare in England 1900-1939 (1980).

Women in England 1870-1950: Sexual Divisions and Social Change (Brighton, 1984).

'The working class wife and mother and state intervention 1870-1918', in Jane Lewis (ed.), Labour and Love. Womens' Experience of Home and Family 1850-1950 (1986).

Jill Liddington and Jill Norris, One Hand Tied Behind Us (1984).

David Lockwood, The Black Coated Worker (1966).

W.J.Lowe, 'The Lancashire Irish and the Catholic Church 1846-71: the social dimension', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xx, no.20, 1976-7.

Steven Lukes, 'Political ritual and social integration', in Steven Lukes, Essays in Social Theory (1977).

Emile Durkheim (1981).

F.S.L.Lyons, The Irish Parliamentary Party 1890-1910 (1951).

'The decline and fall of the Nationalist party', in O.Dudley Edwards and fergus Pyle (eds.), 1916. The Easter Rising (1968).

revolutionary generation', in F.S.L.Lyons, Culture and Anarchy in Ireland 1890-1939 (Oxford, 1979).

Ireland Since the Famine (1981).

Moira MacAskill, Paddy's Market, Centre for Urban and Regional Research Discussion Paper 29, (University of Glasgow, 1987).

J.F.McCaffrey, 'The Irish vote in Glasgow in the later nineteenth century', Innes Review, vol.xxi, part 1, 1970.

Dan McDermott, 'Labour and Ireland', in Brown, First Labour Party.

Oliver MacDonagh, 'Irish culture and Nationalism translated: St.Patrick's day, 1888, in Australia' in MacDonagh, Mandle and Travers, Culture and Nationalism.

J.Ramsay MacDonald, The Socialist Movement (1912)

Georgiana Putnam MacEntee, The Social Catholic Movement in Great Britain (New York, 1927).

D.E.McHenry, The Labour Party in Transition 1931-38 (1938).

Roger McHugh, 'The Catholic Church and the Rising', in Edwards and Pyle, 1916.

Stuart MacIntyre, 'British Labour, Marxism and working class apathy in the nineteen twenties', Historical Journal, vol.xx, no.2, 1977.

Robert McKenzie and Allan Silver, Angels in Marble. Working Class Conservatives in Urban England (1968).

Iain MacLean, The Legend of Red Clydeside, (Glasgow, 1983).

Hugh McLeod, 'Class, community and region: the religious geography of ninteenth century England', Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain, no.6, 197 .

'White collar values and the role of religion', in Crossick, Lower Middle Class.

'Religion in the city', Urban History Yearbook, 1978.

Religion and the Working Class in Nineteenth Century Britain (1984).

'Building the "Catholic ghetto": Catholic organisations 1870-1914, in Sheils and Wood, Voluntary Religion

'New perspectives on Victorian working class religion: the oral evidence', Oral History, vol.xiv, no.1, 1986.

'Catholicism and the New York Irish 1880-1910', in Oblekevich, Roper and Samuel, Disciplines of Faith.

R.W.Malcomson, Popular Recreation in English Society, 1700-1850 (1973).

Manchester University Settlement, Social Studies of a Manchester City Ward. 2. Housing Conditions in Ancoats (Manchester, 1928).

3. Housing Needs of Ancoats in Relation to the Greenwood Act (Manchester, 1930).

Some Social Aspects of Pre-War Tenements and of Post-War Flats (Manchester, 1932).

Ancoats: a Study of a Clearance Area (Manchester, 1943).

W.F.Mandle, The Gaelic Athletic Association and Irish Nationalist Politics, 1884-1924 (1987).

Nicholas Mansergh, 'The Unionist party and the Union 1886-1916', in Edwards and Pyle, 1916.

T.R.Marr, Housing Conditions in Manchester and Salford (Manchester, 1904).

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, On Britain (Moscow, 1962).

Francis M.Mason, 'The newer Eve: the Catholic Suffrage Society in England, 1911-23', Catholic Historical Review, vol.lxxii, 1986.

Tony Mason, 'The Blues and the Reds', Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, vol.cxxxiv, 1984.

Mass Observation, A Puzzled People (1947).

The Pub and the People. A Worktown Study (1970).

H.C.G.Matthews, R.I.McKibbin and J.A.Kay, 'The franchise factor in the rise of the Labour party', English Historical Review, vol.xci, 1976.

Timothy J.Meagher, '"Why should we care for a little trouble or a walk through the mud": St.Patrick's and Columbus Day parades in Worcester, Massachusetts 1845-1915', New England Quarterly, vol.lvii, 1985.

Reverand J.E.Mercer, 'The condition of life in Angel Meadow', Transactions of the Manchester Statistical Society, 1897.

William L.Miller, Electoral Dynamics in Britain Since 1918 (1977).

William L.Miller and Gillian Raab, 'The religious alignment at English elections between 1918 and 1970', Political Studies, 25, 1977.

Thomas P.Monaghan, 'The extent of interdenominational marriage in the United States', Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, vol.x, 1971.

T.W.Moody, 'Michael Davitt and the British labour movement 1882-1906', Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 5th series, vol.iii, 1953.

F.T.Moore, 'The Hulme youth problem', Social Welfare, vol.iv, no.7, January 1941.

Robert Moore, Pit-Men, Preachers and Politics (Cambridge, 1974).

'Religion as a source of variation in working class images of society', in Martin Bulmer (ed.), Working Class Images of Society (1977).

Bill Murray, The Old Firm (Edinburgh, 1984).

Tom Nairn, The Break Up of Britain (1981).

Frank Neal, Sectarian Violence: the Liverpool Experience, 1819-1914 (Manchester, 1987).

E.R.Norman, The English Catholic Church in the Nineteenth Century (Oxford, 1984).

Jim Obelkevich, 'New perspectives on the history of the Labour party, 1918-45', Society for the Study of Labour History, Bulletin, no.47, 1983.

Alan O'Day, The English Face of Irish Nationalism (1977).

John O'Dea, The Story of the Old Faith in Manchester (Manchester, 1910).

Rachel O'Higgins, 'The Irish influence on the Chartist movement', Past and Present, no.20, 1961.

M.A.G.O'Tuathaigh, 'The Irish in nineteenth century Britain: problems of integration' in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City.

E.Sylvia Pankhurst, The Suffragette Movement (1931).

David G.Pearson, 'Race, religiosity and political activism: some observations on West Indian participation in Britain', British Journal of Sociology, no.3, vol.xxix, 1978.

Henry Pelling, The British Communist Party. A Historical Profile (1958).

'Religion and the ninteenth century British working class', Past and Present, no.27, 1964.

The Social Geography of British Elections 1885-1910 (1967).

'Popular attitudes to religion', in Henry Pelling, Popular Politics and Society in Victorian Britain (1968).

A Short History of the Labour Party (1982).

Paul T.Phillips, The Sectarian Spirit: Sectarianism, Society and Politics in Victorian Cotton Towns (Toronto, 1982)

Stuart Rawnsley, 'The membership of the British Union of Fascists', in Kenneth Lunn and Richard Thurlow (eds.), British Fascism. Essays on the Radical Right in Interwar Britain (1980).

A.Redford, Labour Migration in England 1800-50 (Manchester, 1975).

Alastair Reid, 'Class and organisation', Historical Journal, vol.xxx, no.1, 1987.

Fred Reid, 'Keir Hardie and the "Labour Leader" 1893-1903', in Winter, The Working Class in Modern British History.

N.Reid, 'The Manchester and Salford ILP', North West Labour History Society Bulletin, no.5, 1979.

John Rex, 'Immigrants and British labour: the sociological context', in Lunn, Hosts, Immigrants and Minorities.

W.A.Richardson, 'The Hugh Oldham's Lads' Club', Manchester Review, vol.viii, 1959.

Elizabeth Roberts, 'Learning and living - socialisation outside school', Oral History, vol.iii, no.2, 1975.

Working Class Barrow and Lancaster 1890 to 1930, Centre for North West Regional Studies, Occasional Papers, No.2, (University of Lancaster, 1976).

A Woman's Place An Oral History of Working Class Women 1890-1940 (Oxford, 1984).

Paul Rose, The Manchester Martyrs (1970).

H.C.Rowe, The Boggart Hole Contest (Manchester, 1897).

Rachel Ryan, A Biography of Manchester (1937).

Raphael Samuel, 'The Roman Catholic Church and the Irish poor', in Swift and Gilley, Victorian City.

'Class politics: the lost world of British Communism, Part Three', New Left Review, no. 165, 1987.

John Saville, 'Trade unions and Free Labour: the background to the Taff Vale decision', in Asa Briggs and John Saville (eds.), Essays in Labour History (1967).

'May Day 1937', in Asa Briggs and John Saville (eds.), Essays in Labour History 1918-1939 (1977).

Jeremy Seabrook, What Went Wrong? (1978).

A World to Win (1985).

B.Seebohm Rowntree, Poverty. A Study of Town Life (1901).

Poverty and Progress. A Second Social Survey of York (1941).

B.Seebohm Rowntree and G.R.Lavers, Life and Leisure. A Social Survey (1951)

Fred Scott, 'The condition and occupations of the people of Manchester and Salford', Transactions of the Royal Statistical Society, 1888-9.

George Scott, The R.C.s (1967).

Hereward Senior, Orangeism in Ireland and Britain 1795-1836 (1966).

Philip Sidney, Modern Rome in Modern England (1906).

Brian Simon, Education and the Labour Movement 1870-1920 (1974).

The Politics of Educational Reform 1920-1940 (1974).

E.D.Simon and J.Inman, The Rebuilding of Manchester (1935).

A.W.Smith, 'Popular religion', Past and Present, no.40, 1969.

Joan Smith, 'Labour tradition in Glasgow and Liverpool', History Workshop Journal, no.17, 1984.

John Springall, Youth, Empire and Society. British Youth Movements 1883-1940 (1977).

E.D.Steele, 'The Irish presence in the North of England 1850-1914', Northern History, vol.xii, 1976.

Jennifer F.Supple, 'The Catholic clergy of Yorkshire 1850-1900: a profile', Northern History, vol.xxi, 1985.

Arthur G.Symonds, 'Unfashionable Manchester', East Lancashire Review, vol.iii, 1899.

Stephan Thernstrom, Poverty and Progress. Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge, Mass, 1964).

The Other Bostonians. Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis 1880-1970 (Cambridge, Mass, 1973).

John L.Thomas, 'The factor of religion in the selection of marriage mates', American Sociological Review, vol.xvi, no.4, 1951.

Derek Thompson, 'Courtship and marriage in Preston between the Wars', Oral History, vol.iii, no.2, 1975.

Dorothy Thompson, 'Ireland and the Irish in English Radicalism before 1850', in James Epstein and Dorothy Thompson (eds.), The Chartist Experience (1982).

E.P.Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (1977).

Paul Thompson, Socialists, Liberals and Labour. The Struggle for London 1885-1914 (1967).

J.H.Treble, 'The attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards trade unionism in the North of England 1833-1842', Northern History, vol.v, 1970.

'O'Connor, O'Connell and the attitude of Irish immigrants towards Chartism in the north of England, 1838-48' in J.Butts and I.F.Clarke (eds.), The Victorians and Social Protest (1973)

Philip Ullah, 'Second-generation Irish youth: identity and ethnicity', New Community Studies, vol.xii, no.2, 1985.

David Vincent, Bread, Knowledge and Freedom. A Study of Nineteenth Century Working Class Autobiography (1981).

Kenneth D.Wald, Crosses on the Ballots (Princeton, 1983).

Brenda M.Walker, 'The Whit-walk as a holiday from the "Manufactory"', Manchester Review, vol.viii, 1957.

W.M.Walker, 'Irish immigrants in Scotland: their priests, politics and parochial life', Historical Journal, vol.xv, no.4, 1972.

P.J.Waller, Democracy and Sectarianism. A Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868-1939 (Liverpool, 1981).

John K.Walton, Lancashire. A Social History 1558-1939 (Manchester, 1987).

Robin H.Ward, 'Some aspects of religious life in an immigrant area in Manchester', Sociological Yearbook of Religion, no.3, 1970.

J.M.Werly. 'The Irish in Manchester 1832-49', Irish Historical Studies, vol.xviii, no.71, 1973.

Jerry White, Rothschild Buildings, Life in an East End Tenement Block 1887-1920 (1980).

The Worst Street in North London. Campbell Bunk, Islington, Between the Wars (1986).

John Whyte, Catholics in Western Democracies (1981).

Bill Williams, The Making of Manchester Jewry 1740-1875 (Manchester, 1976).

'The Jewish immigrant in Manchester, the contribution of oral history', Oral History, vol.vii, no.1, 1979.

Ian Wood, 'Irish immigrants and Scottish radicalism 1880-1906', in Ian MacDougall, Essays in Scottish Labour History (Edinburgh, 1978).

Arthur Woolerton, The Labour Movement in Manchester and Salford (Manchester, 1907).

Arnold Wright, Disturbed Dublin (1914).

Chris Wrigley, 'Labour and the trade unions' in Brown, The First Labour Party.

Michael Young and Peter Wilmott, Family and Kinship in East London (1983).

A.J.Youngson Brown, 'Trade union policy in the Scots coalfields 1855-1885', Economic History Review, second series, vol.vi, no.1, 1953.

8. Seminar Papers.

Robert Colls, 'The politics of Englishness, 1880-1980', paper presented at the graduate seminar, Centre for the Study of Social History, University of Warwick, January 19th 1988.

David Fowler, 'The interwar youth consumer in Manchester', paper presented at Manchester History Workshop Day Scool, 3rd May 1986

C.Desmond Greaves, 'The Connolly Association', paper presented at the North West Labour History Society annual conference, 26th March 1988.

Manchester Women's History Group, 'Women and housing', paper presented at Manchester History Workshop Day School, 3rd May 1986.

Ellen Ross, 'Motherhood in London, 1880-1914', paper presented at the University of Birmingham Social History seminar, 20th March 1985.

Bill Williams, 'Minority experience in Manchester society: the Jewish example', paper presented at the Manchester History Workshop Day School, 'The Making of Manchester', 9th March 1985.

9. Theses.

Irene Babcock, Angel Meadow: a Study of a Migrant Community in Victorian Manchester, unpublished B.A. dissertation, Manchester Polytechnic, 1980.

D.Barber, School Accomodation Problems in Manchester 1919-39, unpublished M.Ed, University of Manchester, 1960.

Leslie Bather, A History of Manchester and Salford Trades Council, unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1956.

Rodney Baxter, The Liverpool Labour Party 1918-1963, unpublished D.Phil, University of Oxford, 1969.

Harrington W.Benjamin, The London Irish: a Study in Political Activism 1870-1910, unpublished Ph.D., University of Princeton, 1976.

M.E.Brock, Irish Immigrants in the Manchester District 1830-1854: Some Aspects of Their Social and Political Importance, unpublished M.A., University of Southampton, 1962.

G.P.Connolly, Catholicism in Manchester and Salford 1770-1850, unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1980.

Joan L.Harley, Report of an Enquiry into the Occupations, Further Education and Leisure Interests of Girl Wage-Earners from Elementary and Central Schools in the Manchester District, with Special Reference to the Influence of School Training on Their Use of Leisure, unpublished M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1937.

W.G.Jackson, An Historical Study of the Provision of Facilities for Play and Recreation in Manchester, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1940.

Neville Kirk, Class and Fragmentation: Some Aspects of Working Class Life in South East Lancashire and North East Cheshire 1850-70, unpublished Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 1974.

Geoffry Seuss Law, Manchester's Politics 1885-1906, unpublished Ph.D., University of Pennsylvania, 1975.

M.McDermott, Irish Catholics and the British Labour Movement: a Study with Particular Reference to London 1918-1970, unpublished M.A., University of Kent, 1979.

Hew Reid, The Furniture Workers - from Craft to Industrial Union 1865-1972, unpublished Ph.D., University of Warwick, 1982.

Melanie Tebbutt, The Evolution of Ethnic Stereotypes: An Examination of Stereotyping with Particular Reference to the Irish (and to a Lesser Extent the Scots) in Manchester during the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1982.

J.H.Treble, The Place of the Irish Catholics in the Social Life of the North of England 1829-51, unpublished Ph.D., University of Leeds, 1968.

B.M.Walter, The Geography of Irish Migration to Britain Since 1939 With Special Reference to Luton and Bolton, unpublished Ph.D., University of Oxford, 1978.

Philip Whitaker, The Growth of Liberal Organisation in Manchester From the 1860s to 1903, unpublished Ph.D., University of Manchester, 1956.

W.H.Whalley, An Historical Account of Catholic Education in England with Special Reference to Educational Activities in the Salford Diocese, unpublished M.Ed., University of Manchester, 1938.

F.L.Wilson, The Irish in Great Britain During the First Half of the Nineteenth Century, unpublished M.A., University of Manchester, 1946.

E.P.M.Woollaston, The Irish Nationalist Movement in Great Britain 1886-1908, unpublished M.A., University of London, 1958.